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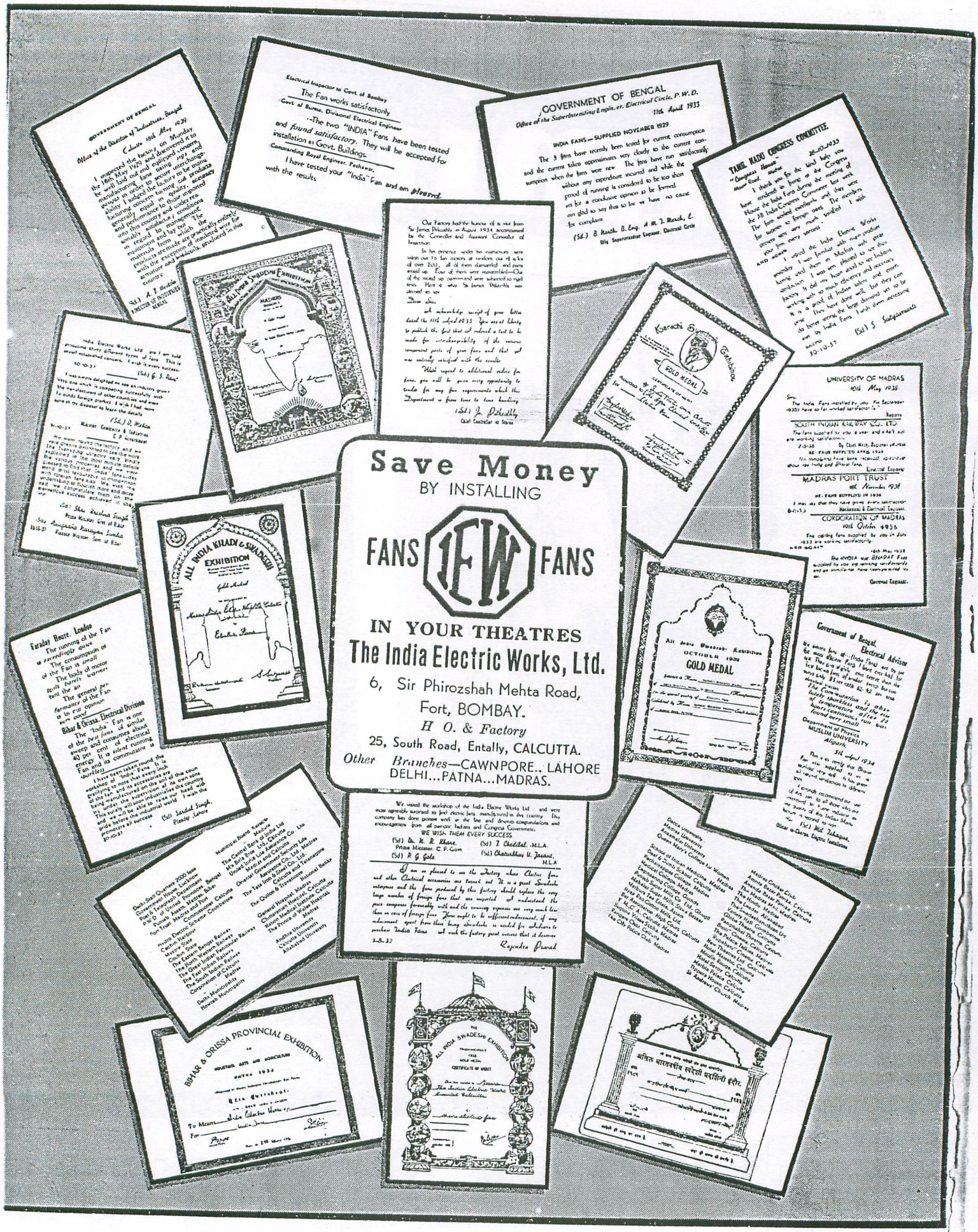
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Editor: **BABURAO PATEL**

Vol. 6 MARCH 1940 No. 3

Vagaries of the Censors

The Bengal Board of Film Censors recently banned "Juarez" the Warner picture which Indian audiences had so much liked and which the nationalist press of India had so much boosted.

The action of the Bengal Board is rather suspicious in view of the fact that the picture was allowed to run in "The Lighthouse" a prominent Calcutta cinema for a week and thereafter the ban was imposed when the local distributors tried to revive the picture at another cinema.

On what grounds was the picture banned? No one can answer this question satisfactorily. If the picture was considered good enough for its first run and allowed to run, why was it so suddenly banned?

The order of the Bengal Board was circulated to the other Censor boards in India and now the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar has also banned the picture.

And still the question stands. Why?

A Sub-Committee of the Bombay Board of Film Censors had passed "Juarez" and the picture was enthusiastically received by all who saw it.

Indians all over the country liked the picture and praised it in no uncertain terms. The

inlaid pattern of democracy on which a story of numerous thrilling incidents has been built was something which Indians have been thirsting for so long. It was their story with the country and the characters changed. In the victory of Juarez, Indians perceived their own triumph of the future. By his immortal speech on imperialism, Juarez has expressed the long suppressed sentiments of freedom-loving Indians.

Speaking to the representatives of foreign powers, who had come to plead for the life of Maxmillian, Juarez has said:

"Your Excellencies make use of a jargon which was designed to conceal the principle which motivates your European civilization: A civilization which permits the wanton oppression of the weak by the strong, wherein each great nation in turn inflicts its will upon some weaker nations!—By what right do the great powers of Europe invade the lands of simple people, kill all who do not make them welcome, destroy their fields and take the fruit of their toil from those who survive?"

"Is it a crime against God, then, that the skin of some men is of different colour? That they do not wear shoes upon their feet? They know nothing of factories and commerce? By what right, then, do the great powers destroy them?"

"If there is one among you who can answer me, I'll give him the life of Maximilliano of Habsburg! .. .. Maximilliano must die for a guilt that is not his own, but yours, Senores! The guilt of Europe! The world must know that one generous in purpose, was duped to his death by the vanity of power-drunk dictators! The world must know it, senores, lest, those who duped him send another in his stead!"

"The world must know the fate of any foreign usurper who sets his foot upon this soil!"

"The world must know that Mexico is not a spoil for the butchering, exploiting powers of your European civilization!"

Is it possible that these eloquent words of Juarez, burned the European ears in India? Did the Englishmen in India fancy Mahatma Gandhi in place of Juarez and put India in place of Mexico?

Did the words of Juarez sound like a death knell of their imperialism in India?

For what reason otherwise was the picture banned? In India, Indians see a picture and the Indians had liked this picture. They hailed it. Then, who else could have taken offence, but the white race of Englishmen in India?

Evidently the official European mind did not object at first, because the picture was allowed to be released. The whitemen who saw it at the theatres probably thought that their empire would be doomed, if "Juarez" was allowed to run. And they appealed to the authorities.

This seems to be the accurate reason, because a sly attempt was reported to have been made to remove Juarez's vital speech to pacify the sensitive Englishmen—whose ladies perhaps fainted at the idea that they might someday hear an echo of that immortal speech in India.

It is clear that "Juarez" was banned because Englishmen did not wish to show such a thrilling fight for freedom to the Indians, be it even of Mexico.

Such an instance of political censorship is not desirable and if the Government begins interfering every time because five Tommies and six Harries complain, there will be no end to this racket of political censorship.

Queerly enough, the Bengal Board of Film Censors is the most vacillating in its decisions. The Bengal Board banned "Gunga Din" for "military" reasons, because the British Tommy was shown in a bad light. After the Tommy aspect was excised, the picture was permitted to run. The Board seems to forget the fundamental fact that a picture in India is to be shown to Indians and not to a handful of Englishmen.

The censors must therefore consider what Indians want and not what Europeans do not want. And until this fundamental difference is realized we shall have to face stupid decisions by the different censor boards.

That is one more reason why India should have her freedom early.

Motilal leads a useful cast in "Holi" a Ranjit picture to be shortly released at the Opera House, Bombay.

have the desire to improve—and above all men who are selfless patriots and not mere honour-hunters. Such men with a broader outlook are now required to give the industry a better guidance for the future.

Even if they become more strict in the execution of their duties, their strictness will be of greater help to the industry than the senile help of a crowd of yes-men who are always puzzled at their own decisions.

May we suggest some institutions that may be represented on the next Board? (1) The Indian Motion Picture Producers' Association, (2) The Film Journalists' Association of India, (3) The Motion Picture Society of India, (4) The Indian Merchants' Chamber (5) The University of Bombay.

The institutions may be asked to nominate their own representatives on the Board.

WITH TWO BANKS IN HIS POCKET!

Lack of finance and financiers has been a chronic complaint of the Indian film industry. Find two producers together in any crowded or secluded spot and you will hear them wailing over the problem of finance.

Seth Ramnath Daga

The Indian Motion Picture Congress and the Silver Jubilee Celebrations certainly did give big publicity to our film industry, with the result that several new financiers have ventured to invest their money in films.

A notable example is Seth Ramnath Kasturchand Daga the Bikaner multi-millionaire, who they say "can pick any two of the biggest banks in Bombay and buy them outright."

When a man of that eminence and financial resources takes an active interest in our film industry, it is certainly the best news we have after a long time. Besides, in getting a man like Seth Ramnath, the industry secures one of the keenest industrial brains which have faced the multiple problems in high finance and country-wide commerce.

The India Artists Ltd., is a pet child of the Daga family and like other children in this illustrious family, I am sure this new film producing concern will soon blossom into a big beehive of industry.

With the young and well-educated Dwarkadas Daga and Kishore Sahu our talented artiste being in joint execution of the job, it will not be surprising to expect pictures with a greater social significance coming from this new company, very soon.

As an earnest of the high ideals this enterprising company has set itself, "Bahurani" a provocative social picture is already well on way and I hope it will prove a big success to tempt many more Dagas to our industry. For, the success of Seth Ramnath Daga will certainly set other bankers thinking furiously.

BAD SALESMANSHIP?

Once again another good Hollywood picture has gone off the screen quietly—as quietly as it came. I refer to "The Hollywood Cavalcade" produced by the 20th Century Fox.

As a beautiful historical document of the motion picture industry in Hollywood, it had several aspects of interest to all the screen fans who would have certainly liked to know the development of the film industry and its early struggles. In addition, the picture had a good soothing romance to sustain the interest of the romantic minded. Alice Faye and Don Amecha, two popular players, also provided one more argument to bring the picture to the notice of the cinema-goers.

But, alas for some reason or other, the local distributors allowed the picture to step in quietly and step out more quietly. May we know why? Where is the sense in 20th Century Fox producing a picture on such a lavish scale and their local representatives not telling the people so.

If the "Hollywood Cavalcade" shows bad returns from India, it will be due to just bad salesmanship.

MAGNIFICENT, INDEED!

Regal, "The Theatre Magnificent" will no longer be magnificent if its air-cooling equipment keeps on crying for repairs a little longer.

During the last three months, whenever, I visited the theatre, its "magnificence" in air-cooling was conspicuous by its absence.

Relying upon these new equipments, even the fans, which now look ancient but were once perfectly reliable, have not been fitted up. Imagine the discomfort to the audience on a hot sultry day with the theatre packed.

While seeing "All Quiet On The Western Front" I felt as miserable as some of those soldiers in the dug-out.

When people pay for certain comforts in a theatre, promised by reassuring advertisements, and they don't get them for a longer time than is allowed for accidents, they have a right to feel that they are being cheated.

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THIS TECHNIQUE OF BREAKING HEADS

Mr. K. A. Abbas in his timely article "Communalists, Keep Out" which appeared in the February issue of "Filmindia," has condemned the questionable activities of certain dirty communalists who have been responsible for introducing this despicable canker in our film industry, which had hitherto been free of such diseases.

At this stage it is not advisable to expose the names of those culprits, but as Abbas puts it,, "We will fight like hell to keep the film industry free from the insidious communalism," we think every one who wishes well for the industry should contribute his efforts to keep the industry within its legitimate limits of art and commerce.

We are reliably informed that after the publication of Mr. Abbas' article, some Mahomedan directors have actually gone out and formed a communal association for this very purpose, which we seek to discourage.

At a private banquet ("Khana") of a couple of directors and their several standard bearers, inspite of the cool sea breeze, the night was made warm by expressions like: "Even this Abbas has let us down," Damn that Baburao Patel—only a broken head will teach him a lesson." When some one suggested that many educated Mahomedans truly believe in what Abbas wrote some one said, "Are they Mahomedans? I call them Kafirs". Some one said, "I have 500 Mahomedans in Bhendy Bazar and they will give their lives for me."

On the other hand, several communal minded Hindus also seem to be considerably perturbed over Abbas' brilliant article. Incidentally they learnt of the Muslim Dinner and as if to vie with the Muslims arranged their "Cha pani" (tea party). There Baburao Patel had "let them down" though it was expected of him to contribute his best efforts to counteract the "growing aggression" of Muslim talents.

The second "association" hopes to do its best to counteract the activities of the first and vice versa.

Is this not a shameful state of affairs for an industry? This disgraceful racketeering, goaded by personal jealousies, must stop and immediately. If it doesn't, "Filmindia" will be compelled to come out with the names of the culprits who seek to ruin an industry, that has hitherto maintained 60,000 honest workers irrespective of caste and creed. And if in doing so, Baburao Patel's head is broken by those 500 "mawalis" from Bhendy Bazar, it is well worth risking it. After all, Baburao Patel's head is not more important than the livelihood of 60,000 honest workers. Let it be broken to keep the canker of communalism out of our film industry.

By the way, why not once in a way experiment with Ahmad Abbas' head? I am told, it is easier to break and the man is too damn polite even to object.

THE NEW CENSOR BOARD

After three years, a new Board of Film Censors for Bombay will be appointed to officiate from the 1st of July 1940. During the last three years the Indian film industry has registered a lot of progress in all directions, particularly in its ideals and in the social significance of its existence. To-day, it is an established industry with a stability that promises many more years of continuous progress.

To encourage an industry with such a future, it is necessary that the Censor Board which plays a vital part in its existence should be composed of a fully representative personnel in whom the people of the industry will have complete confidence.

The personnel of the 1937-40 board was certainly an improvement on those of the previous boards, but it is an undisputed fact that it was far far from the ideal. It is hardly necessary to criticize now the vagaries of the outgoing members of the board. They are going out and let us allow them to go out as quietly as they came in and stayed in for the last three years without reorganizing the Bombay Board.

Our duty is to get better men for the future—men with better vision and not half-tired old fossiles who lend an extra fear to death and make old age a symbol of helpless senility. Let us have younger people with progressive ideas—men who will represent different sections of society and different phases of life—men who have travelled and seen things—men who have read contemporary thought and who

Anuradha in "Bahurani" the maiden production of India Artists Ltd.

THE TECHNIQUE OF TECHNICIANS

Bulletin No. 11 of the Association of Cine Technicians of India is a very good publication and perhaps the best in its class all over the world. Repeating their old resolution, "To serve, to guide and to unite our brotherhood" for 1940, the technicians have added some very valuable features to their No. 11 Bulletin, notable among them being "Our Post Bag" in which different members seek to give very useful technical information in the shape of replies to their readers. The other reading matter is in keeping with the ideals of the Association, and to those of our readers who are technically inclined, we could not recommend a better periodical than the Technicians' Bulletin, which is priced at eight annas a copy and can be had from the Association offices at Main Road, Dadar, Bombay.

MORE ABOUT THE CONGRESS!

Requests and persuasions are once again in circulation asking people to cooperate fully for making the forthcoming session at Calcutta of the Indian Motion Picture Congress, a success.

While this is being done, people in the industry seem to forget the one fundamental fact that the resolutions of the last session have merely become pious hopes without the necessary action.

It would be more practical for the organizers of the Congress to appoint a Sub-Committee to give a practical shape to the paper resolutions of last year, rather than waste more time and money in assembling at Calcutta and reiterating the old resolutions. What the film industry wants most to-day is decisive action.

STILL IN THE WRONG SADDLE

"Filmindia" caught the thought in its flight when it suggested last month that the artistes want a new president. Sheer decorum had prevented several artistes from expressing this desire at the meetings of the Association. Now that the secret is no longer a secret, they expect Mr. Sohrab Mody to come up to their expectations by resigning as their president, if he is not so anxious to hold on to it in spite of their will, and allow some one else of their choice to fill up the vacancy.

Several members also feel that Mr. Mody is not qualified to become even an ordinary member of the Artistes' Association, because he happens to be a prominent producer and as such an employer of artistes.

When Chandra Mohan, that popular actor said on the air: "I would not allow producers to be directors, nor directors to be actors," the other members appreciated how appropriately a brother artiste had expressed their own thought. Unfortunately, Mr. Mody is an all-in-one edition of an artiste, director and producer, not to mention the employer.

The smaller artistes even suspect their higher paid leaders of a moral sabotage when a producer is thrust upon them as the president of a body that is essentially composed of workers.

It is alright for Sohrab Mody to be humble and modest by saying that he is first and foremost an artiste, but let him not do so at the expense of people whom he condescendingly calls his comrades. Mr. Mody's place is with the producers and not with the studio artistes.

If the Artistes' Association is going to smell of capitalism in its very first year—capitalism that is usually wedded to exploitation of the poor by the rich of the "innocents" by the intellectuals—then, the future of the Association is certainly not very rosy. The artistes would do well to follow the excellent lead given by the technicians who have within a very short time made their association a well established institution doing splendid work, while the artistes—usually known for their brag—are still groping for guidance from Sohrab Mody a producer who has made several lakhs in "Pukar"

I still think that Sohrab Mody should sit with the producers and not with the artistes. He has promoted himself to that position now with his eloquent success as a producer. Why not leave the struggling artistes alone to their own activities?

"COMMONSENSE CROSSWORD" No. 172

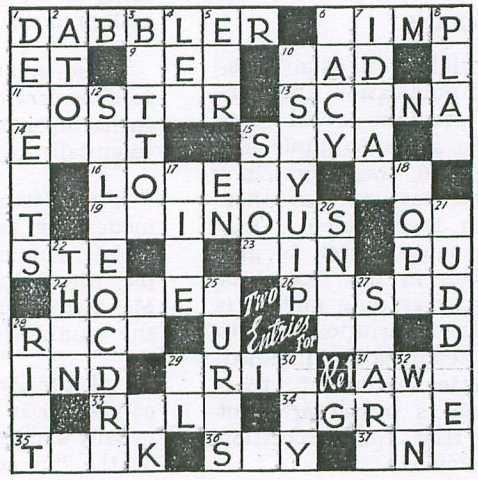
"I never dreamed of winning such a sum," said the recent winner of a fortune in *Commonsense Crosswords*. He had done something more purposeful than dream. But if you have ever had the dream our artist pictures, now is the time to make it a golden reality—always remembering, of course, that the damsel in the sketch is purely symbolical! Rs.12,000 is waiting to be won, and you are allowed two entries for one rupee. Rs.5,000 is set aside for Runners-up, besides which there are unlimited extra prizes. A little practice on the Square below will bring you nearer the First Prize than a lifetime of dreams or daydreams.

CLUES ACROSS

1. It is truly said that two idlers are less exasperating than one this
6. To walk lamely
9. Poetic contraction of *over*
10. Boy
11. To nurse or encourage
13. Elaborate dramatic solo
14. To give or send out
15. Valuable bean grown in Far East
16. Being this is apt to make a woman become cynical about men
19. Foreboding evil
23. Sometimes has a pleasantly intoxicating effect
24. It is hard to foster the spirit of family life in this
26. In an assumed attitude
28. One is apt speedily to grow tired of this food
29. Studious young women often seem misleadingly this to many young men
31. Cobblers' tool
33. The average woman likes to feel she can this her lover
34. The world would be happier but duller if we could all this
35. At boarding schools most boys would like much more this than they are generally allowed
36. Reserved person is often mistakenly thought to be this
37. Conclusion

CLOSING DATE, MARCH 15th.

N.B.—The Entry Fee in this Competition is Re. 1 for 2 Entry Squares and Entry Forms will be published in the issue of March 3rd.



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ONLY ENTRY FORMS
CUT OUT FROM
"THE ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY OF INDIA"
of March 3rd
will be accepted.

CLUES DOWN

1. Our own these tend to make us sympathetic about those of our friends
2. Tiny particle of matter
3. Lowest part
4. Sheltered side of a ship
5. To make a mistake
6. Like lace
7. Woman he loves helps to remould many a man's . . .
8. How difficult it is to do this when one is worried!
10. Jumbled spelling of *piously*
12. Jumbled spelling of *crocodiles*
15. Being desperately in love is apt to make a young man this at his work
17. Unsophisticated people sometimes foolishly regard philandering as this
18. Excitable people are apt to act incautiously when given too much this
20. Is apt to make one rather cold
21. Some nervy young women tend to behave hysterically when they are this
22. Lean
25. Entices
27. Rather than punish him some fond parents are apt misguidedly to this a naughty child
28. Sometimes causes good friends to become bitter enemies
30. Month of the year
32. Kind of tumour

COPIES AVAILABLE FROM ALL NEWSAGENTS

The EDITOR'S MAIL

[In this section, the editor himself replies to queries from the readers. As thousands of letters are received every month—some anxious and several frivolous—it is neither possible nor convenient to attend to all. Selected letters are usually treated in an informative and humorous strain and no offence is meant to anyone.]

Ram Pratap Dixit (Fatehgarh)

What is your opinion about the present-day productions of New Theatres? Is it not like filling old wine in new bottles?

Do you know that old wine is expensive because it tastes better? And besides, don't you think that some of the new "bottles" given by N.T. are quite attractive shop articles?

Balu T. Daryanania (Hyderabad)

When will "Achhut" in English version be released? Is it nearing completion?

I think it will never be produced. It has become one of those time-worn threats which Indian producers give us in their utter modesty.

What is the usual length of an Indian picture? Which is the longest picture in India?

The usual length is somewhere between 12 and 13 thousand feet. But the longest picture is that which bores you the most and we do have a large number of marathon shows like this every year.

P. P. Narayan (Matunga)

What is the real name of Anuradha alias Sushila? Can you give me some personal details about her?

Her true name is Khursheed but now I think she has permanently taken up Anuradha as I find her playing a good role under that name in "Bahurani" an India Artists' picture. Personal information is beyond my scope.

T. B. Menon (Calcutta)

What about the future film career of Shanta Apte?

It is for her to decide whether to chase the shadow or the substance. She seems to be doing well with a bit of publicity in odd towns.

G. Haji (Dar-es-Salaam)

Has Khursheed acted in any other picture except "As You Please"?

You will see her in "Holi" the new Ranjit social picture which will soon come to the screen.

M. S. Swamy (Bangalore)

Which is the better picture between the two; "Snake Charmer" and "Kapal Kundala"?

The Snake Charmer charmed more.

V. D. Shena (Trivandrum)

Whom do you consider the most beautiful among the following: Kanan Bala, Naseem, Shanta Apte and Devika Rani?

Devika Rani! And that is enough.

Who will be the heroine of Shantaram's next picture?

Miss Opportunity.

S. Ramkrishna (Thillasthanam)

Why don't you publish a three-colour photo of Chandramohan of "Pukar" fame?

With Chandramohan already so popular, I don't think Sohrab Mody will risk doing it.

Ravi Venkatapati Rao (Mopidevi)

Who is the best art director in our film industry?

Syed Fatehlal of Prabhat.

Please recommend some books on art direction?

See Prabhat pictures.

Harimohan Nandkeolyar (Allahabad)

I am in the habit of collecting autograph photos of famous stars. But unfortunately, I don't possess the photo of Leela Chitnis?

That is really a misfortune in 1940 with Leela as a top liner today. Why not write to her c/o Bombay Talkies, Malad and I am sure she won't refuse.

Dr. Wazir Chand Chopra (Jullunder)

I have seen "Admi" fifteen times. Will Shantaram send me his photo if I write to him?

I think you ought to send your photo to Shantaram. He would like to see the man who paid him a tribute fifteen times. By the way, have you been a policeman before by any chance?

Raman Desai (Bombay)

What is the place of music in Indian pictures?

It is just misplaced at present.

Miss Kamla Mathur (Lahore)

What are the elements of a really good screen story which all audiences will like?

Producers and critics are wont to say that a certain picture is either good for "the masses" or for "the classes". But this classification is merely mythical. A picture is seen by all at the same time—young and old, clever and innocent, cultur-

ed and illiterate, rich and poor, healthy and suffering—all seek entertainment from one picture. As a rule this audience is more emotional and less intellectual. Its vote of popularity is secured only by reaching the lowest-common feeling or approach.

This audience calls for food for its imagination; it wants human stories with laughter and tears; it wants the emotions to be provoked; it wants pleasant excitement, amusement, suspense and intrigue. In short it cries to set its own seal and to give its own approval and sometimes even express its deep indignation after the fashion of its own thoughts.

It says almost in desperation, "console me, amuse me, sadden me, madden me, touch me, make me dream, laugh, shudder, weep but send me home happy."

The screen story must therefore be so fashioned as to give an actual glimpse of life, presented in an emotional dressing, punctuated with a soothing grimness of truth and suggesting an ideal solution within the compass of possibilities.

The so-called masses desire sensational action; the softer people seek emotion and the intellectuals want food for new thought. All demand pleasure. The masses want pleasure for the eyes. The thoughtful want mental enjoyment while the others want a gratification of their feelings.

The writer who embodies all these elements for audience satisfaction, gives the really good story for the screen. And now you know how difficult it is to write a really good story.

Shamboonath Chaturvedi (Ferozabad)

A friend of mine who uses eye-glasses wants to act in films. Do you think his eye-glasses will come in his way?

His luck might but not the eye-glasses. At least two girls, Rose and Leela Chitnis, seem to be doing well inspite of their thick and heavy glasses.

H. V. Desai (Bombay)

Which of the two roles is more difficult to perform: That of 'Kesar' in "Admi" or of 'Radha' in "Kangan"?

For perfect portrayals both are difficult roles to play. But Kesar's role called for more artistry, being more intriguing.

S. S. Altekar (Poona)

How would you compare the acting talents of the following pairs: 1. Prithviraj and B. Pendharkar. 2. Jagdish and Mazhar. 3. Saigal and Motilal. 4. Surendra and Pahari Sanyal. 5. Kamlesh Kumari and Leela Chitnis?

An honest reply to a question like this hurts people. And yet I am inclined to risk this one. Between Baburao Pendharkar and Priviraj, I think Pendharkar is certainly more versatile and subtle in his portrayals than Prithviraj. While Pendharkar gives a polished performance, Prithviraj indulges in clumsy portrayals. While Pendharkar is more natural, Prithviraj has acquired a distinct and monotonous mannerism. While Pendharkar tries to live his roles, Prithviraj merely tries to act. I do not think Prithviraj will ever become a

They star in "Alakh Niranjan" an Arun Picture directed by Bhal G Pendharkar.

great actor in the true sense of the word, but the boy's perseverance and enthusiasm are praiseworthy and his sincerity is beyond reproach. Between Mazhar and Jagdish, I think the latter does not get enough opportunities in New Theatres where he is being vigorously typed in grand old uncle roles. Jagdish however has got a deeper understanding of his roles. Between Saigal and Motilal, Saigal only scores in singing. Motilal beats him hollow in all other things.

Surendra is no comparison with Pahari. Though not a great actor, Pahari has always given a better performance than Surendra both in singing and acting. In calling Leela Chitnis the star of the year, I have only praised her great acting talent. Kamlesh Kumari is too stiff in her portrayals.

R. P. Heda (Amraoti)

In which picture has Kanan Bala given her most splendid performance?

I liked her best in "Vidyapati" and since then—well.——

P. S. Ranganayakulu (Masulipatam)

Why doesn't Mr. Winayak compete in the next all-India Wrestling Tournament?

Don't be impatient. He will. He has still to add a lot to his present weight.

M. R. Patel (Madras)

Is it necessary to become a subscriber to get replies in your "Editor's Mail".

Not absolutely necessary, but it is certainly an advantage. The subscribers' letters are separately filed and in routine they are naturally taken up earlier.

For magazine readers, it is always wise to become subscribers, because by doing so not only a contact with the institution is obtained but the reader comes in direct touch with the Editor.

Why does Devika Rani act with raw young ones when actors of her calibre are available?

Poor Devika cannot answer this one. She is under orders, and like a good trooper she obeys them. Himansu Rai should answer this. Devika the screen's most charming idol must have a good hero.

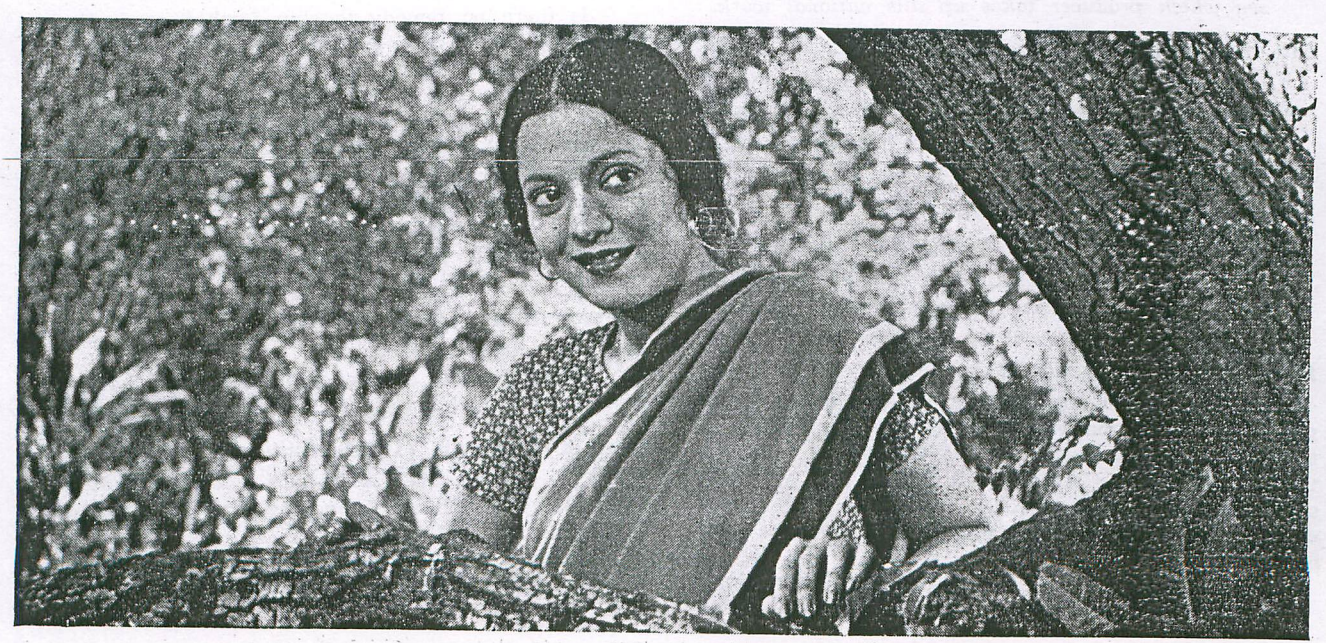
L. Venkatratnam (Coimbatore)

What do you think of students frequently attending film shows?

If they indulge in this habit at the expense of their studies, then I certainly do not appreciate. But for their spare hours, a good film is not only a good entertainment but a good relaxation. And picture seeing is a legitimate pastime, especially pictures with the correct and instructive moral design.

After the recent visit of a film star through South India and the publicity given to her, I expected some more film stars to go through the South, but——?

The others probably do not believe in cheap publicity ideas. The best publicity for a star is her work in the picture. It is only when a so-called star can't give this, that she indulges in some extravagant exploits of attracting attention. But without real work, all these efforts amount to whipping a dead horse. An actress who has to do all this to maintain her so-called stardom is indeed unfortunate and deserves all sympathy for the days that are now no more. She must not be con-



Isn't she charming? Leela Chitnis gives a sparkling performance in "Kangan" a Bombay Talkies' picture.

demned. It is the time honoured struggle for living. After all, life is for living, as Shantaram says and everyone has a right to live it one's own way.

P. V. Subba Rao (Rajamundry)

Who is better: Chandramohan in "Pukar" or Nawab in "Sapera"?

Both gave the best performances of their film careers. As the two roles are poles apart in their design, the two artistes cannot be compared.

K. S. Jeevan (Madras)

Which is a better picture "Marie Antoinette" or "Juarez"?

"Juarez" from all points of view.

D. M. Mudbidri (Dharwar)

Are the members of the Boards of Film Censors elected or nominated?

Unfortunately for all concerned, they are nominated. And most of the nominees are people on the wrong post. Which, by the way, is true of all censor boards all over the world. If censoring has to be done, I wonder, why the right people are not asked to do it.

C. Tejpal (Rajkot)

Can the cinema help to glorify our dead?

Why only the dead? Why not the living? Your question gives me an idea which producers like Sardar Chandulal Shah can put into practical shape. It would be a good national service to popularise our national leaders by making biographical films of their lives. A short film series called "Our National Heroes" and giving pictorially the lives of men like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subash Bose etc., will, I am sure, become very popular and paying while providing an inspiration to the younger generation. Let us see which producer takes up this national work.

Md. Akberalli (Aurangabad)

If I come to Bombay, will you entertain me as your guest and show me round the different studios?

No, I have enough worries of my own without adding you to them.

Miss L. M. Kelly (Sukkur)

What has happened to Wadia's No. 7 thriller?

I want to know what happened to the previous six ones. You are asking the wrong man, my dear. Why not ask me an easier question?

B. K. Zaveri (Devgad Baria)

Replying to me about my stories, you asked me to prepare short summaries of the subjects and send them to the different producers. This I did and they returned the same as refused, but now I find my own stories in some recent pictures. What can I do? And what is the protection for the writers against such producers?

I sympathise with you whole-heartedly. I know that this has been done by some unscrupulous producers before. I am prepared to expose these sly thieves in several papers, if you provide me with complete proof and convince me that your stories have been thus misused. What more can I do for the long suffering writers? I certainly can't turn criminals into honest men.

Syed Mahomed Haroon (Jhansi)

I think Mr. Hafisjee had failed in the direction of "Ghazi Salahuddin". What is your opinion?

My review of the picture appeared in the February issue of "Filmindia". You may read it.

Ebrahim Mota (Pietermaritzburg)

Why is it that kissing takes place in Western films and not in Indian films?

The technique of love making in the East is different. It doesn't need kisses to express love. The Westerners believe more in the obvious gymnastics of love and love has to be seen to be believed. With the Indian, love is a divine flame that burns within and does not need so obvious an advertisement. This may however be the philosophy behind our lack of enterprise, but that should not stop our modern young men from getting themselves stamped with lip sticks in the parks.

B. L. N. Rao (Calcutta)

A friend of mine has sent a registered letter to Mr. Motilal congratulating him for his splendid work in "We Three". But he has not even acknowledged the congratulations?

I have numerous complaints about Motilal, in addition to some I have personally against him. Next time you write to him, send the registered letter with the Acknowledgment Due and the play boy will have to sign acknowledgment before he gets the letter. I think it is too late now to teach him good manners.

Is there no remedy to stop further production of the so-called "stunt" pictures, as every sequence in such pictures is most stupid and unnatural?

Yes, there is a remedy and a very effective one too if there is an unity of action amongst all those who dislike such pictures. Don't see them, and within six months no producer will dare produce one. Such pictures are produced because there are enough fools to see them. The producers are wise people and they know how to cater for this market of fools.

Hassanalli K. Dhanani (Mwanza)

Who directed "Kangan"?

Franz Osten in association with N. R. Acharya and S. Najmul Hasan Naqvi.

Hamid Kashmiri (Dar-es-Salaam)

Can you rate the talents of the following dialogue writers: A. H. Shore; Kamal Amrohi, Kedar Sharma, Arzu and Wajahat Mirza?

I would put Arzu first, Kedar second, Shore and Wajahat would come third and Kamal would naturally be last.

SHOBHANA—Splendid and sparkling, this charming artiste is once again in the news because of her performance in "Mud" a Hindusthan Cinetone picture now running at Pathe.

TIT BITS OF MY TOUR

● BY: BABURAO PATEL ●

WITH MALICE TO NONE

Beer drinking, especially the Japanese "Kirin" and "Asahi" beers, is encouraged in Japan. Prices are cheap, the liquid is tolerably good and foreign bottles break themselves on the tariff walls. And as if to make up for the missing intoxication in the local stuff, beautiful bar girls all over the country serve the beer and very often without even the formal invitation share the glass with the guests.

The bars are open all day and close at midnight and the only males you see about are the men who drink. Rooms are discreetly tucked up on the mezzanine floors, where one can tuck up his puritan morals for the night with his loose purse strings. The paper walls inspire intimate communion with the equally loving neighbour.

* *

Competing severely with the bars are the "Yoshiwaras", "Homukos" and "Fukuharas" of the different cities. All these Japanese words mean a Government controlled quarter where registered prostitutes are allowed to ply their trade under the strictest possible hygienic conditions.

Cleanliness, politeness, beautiful environments, the desire to please, honesty in trade, hygienic conditions, a distinct code of honour and first and last beautiful girls are some of the arguments that keep the Japanese away from marriage and make the tourists forget their wives and settle down in Japan.

The prostitute in Japan is not a victim of any social odium. Very often, well placed government officials marry these girls and society receives them with open arms. The necessity of doing something and living on one's own efforts seems to have been so much realized that even prostitution looks like one more national industry.

Once a girl enters the "Yoshiwara" she can never come out unless someone pays off the price of her original purchase with the sole intention of marrying her. The earnings of the girl are small in comparison with her standing expense in showmanship, toilet and cleanliness—not to speak of the investment on several gold teeth.

A single house contains as many as thirty girls at all ages and their large size photos are displayed in the lobby in attractive costumes and the thirsty traveller can pick his cup of pleasure from the assortment, for the payment of an amount which sounds ridiculous in foreign money.

And there are usually over 300 houses in a single "Yoshiwara". So imagine the organization behind this "industry."

* * *

In Shanghai—the citadel of sin—where all sins which human flesh can commit and endure, where crime is a profession and honesty, a pleasant surprise—the only innocent and seemingly respectable pastime is provided by the several dance halls where numerous girls, known as Taxi Dancers, step out with you on the highly polished floors for a fox-trot that costs about four annas in our money. And for every dance you can change your partner and at the end of the dance give her the usual four-anna ticket. Drinks are not served in these halls but people know it and they either carry hip-pocket flasks or come already drunk.

* * *

Shanghai is not the only city where the Taxi Dancers are found in the East. Almost all the principal towns in Japan and Far East, have such dance halls where the Taxi Dancers are as numerous as the taxis in the street. Certain cosmopolitan towns have the White Russian girls who give the guests a birth day fun every day.

* * *

In addition to its much advertised "Democracy", America is also known for its gangsters and racketeers. A popular racket in San Francisco is to arrest a homeward bound foreigner on the ship on the "charge" of his owing some money to a local American for "personal services" rendered. On an oath that the foreigner is "running back" home with the intention to "defraud" a "respectable" American citizen, the Courts obligingly grant a warrant of body arrest with a proviso for bail in the amount claimed. The amount is generally fixed at the popular figure of 200 dollars, which amount racketeers have found out through long experience and research, as a convenient left-over to be spared for the ever vigilant member of this gentry.

As this "profession" has become quite a nation wide and lucrative "industry", the bailiff supplied is also a polite official who advises in confidence that it is better to pay out quietly and clear out of the country rather than miss the boat, stay in America and fight out the issue.

As there is solid sense in this advice, poor tourists pay and remember the farewell America gave them.

* * *

Another instance of racketeering is reported to be the umpteenth time sale of the City Hall of San Francisco. At regular intervals, phony solicitors bring rich oil farmers from the country and ask them to invest money in real estate in the city. The Municipal City Hall is shown over and very soon sold for a little over a million dollars. At the well appointed "offices" of the attorneys the documents are completed and handed over to the "client" and possession promised within a month. A month later the farmer, now considerably poor, comes to the city with his friends to take possession of "his property" and celebrate a house warming party. The attorney has by now disappeared and when the poor victim claims the Municipal City

Hall, he is often sent to the Lunatic Aslyum.

The other Americans, jolly fellows that they are, merely think it funny that a man could be such a "mug" to be caught that way. No wonder America is a land of every freedom.

* * *

The pimp—the "gentleman" who trades in human flesh and provides pastures for human passions—is an institution as old as the human race. Different countries have different types with different technique. But the Parisian pimp has "traditions" which other members of this international brotherhood can hardly equal. To quote one instance:

A Rangoon engineer was "sightseeing" with his wife near the Opera House at Paris. As the man was looking more at 'others' and less at his wife, the pimp perceived the inner desire of the engineer.

Very soon the wife was left at the hotel and Monsieur Pimp and the Engineer arrived at a bathing salon at Montmartre.

To the unpractised imagination of the thoroughly respectable engineer a sight which he will never forget in a life time was unfolded before his eyes. Over 50 beautiful girls, as nature made them originally, were sporting in a beautifully constructed swimming bath and with the helpful illusion created by multicoloured lights, the engineer soon thought that he was in a paradise. His head was soon in a whirl having never before seen so much shapely material undraped.

Why had he not come to Paris before—why couldn't we have something like this in India—why did he at all marry—Gee! is this heaven—questions like these pushed one another out of his frozen senses. He decided to take a plunge and undressed himself.

Monsieur Pimp offered his help to hold the clothes. Mr. Engineer thought Monsieur to be an awfully obliging fellow. The Engineer entered the water and for an hour lost himself—the only man amongst fifty damsels. His dark skin became popular in the midst of white skinned beauties. The girls crowded round him and soon acquired a thirst which swimming with a stranger gives inevitably.

Our engineer volunteered to treat all. He was rich. He was a civil engineer earning 2,000 a month. And he had money in his pocket.

But where was the pocket. Monsieur Pimp had obliged too well. He had taken the clothes away, with a precious gold watch and £120 in notes.

Mr. Engineer had to go to the hotel in a taxi wrapped in a big bath towel—call the wife out—pay the taxi—pay for the towel—pay for those drinks etc.

He left Paris the next day.

* * *

The American missionaries who come to India on their mission of mercy to give "relief" to the suffering humanity by converting them to Christianity would perhaps be surprised to know how some sex-starved female members of their missions behave on board the ship after a vacation at home.

As a rule these women missionaries are ugly and deformed. But the compulsory long standing training of hypocritical sex-repression gives them brawn and breadth to look imposing.

Some of them I first noticed standing unconcernedly on the upper deck but watching with affectionate jealousy the attractive figures of male bathers in the ship's swimming pool. They looked devout at the weekly masses held in the ship's card room. But in the nights, one could find them in desolate corners with stray men—kissing for dear life. During the day they talked religion but after dusk they pursued other missions too religiously.

For every bad word they heard on the ship, they crossed. To them sin was in speaking, not in acting. No young man could pass them without being scrutinized very thoroughly. Sex-repression had given them an X-ray vision of sizing up men. And one day, they donned the swimming costumes, and people asked: "Could women be so ugly?". Amen!

"Did you leave that much of Ganga Din at least?" asks George Stevens, the producer, "Oh, sure,that much is left, don't worry!" said Baburao Patel.

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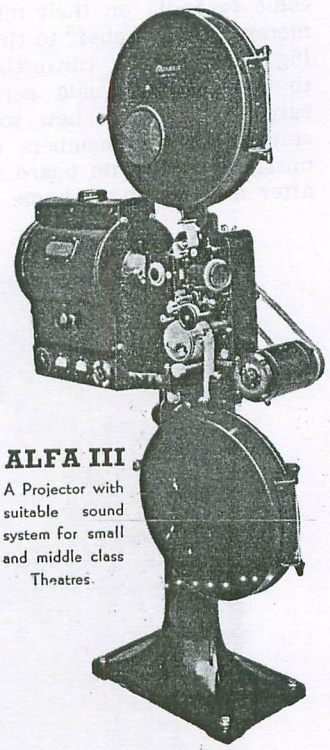

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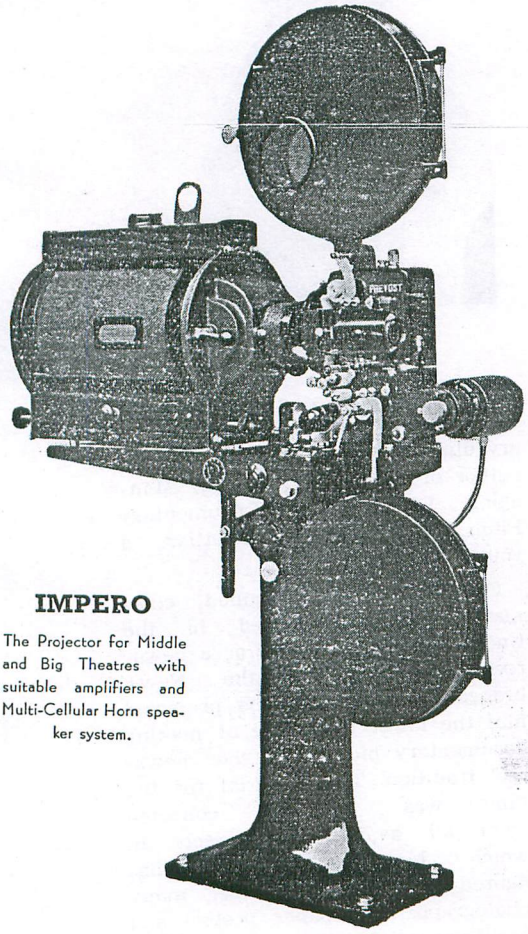

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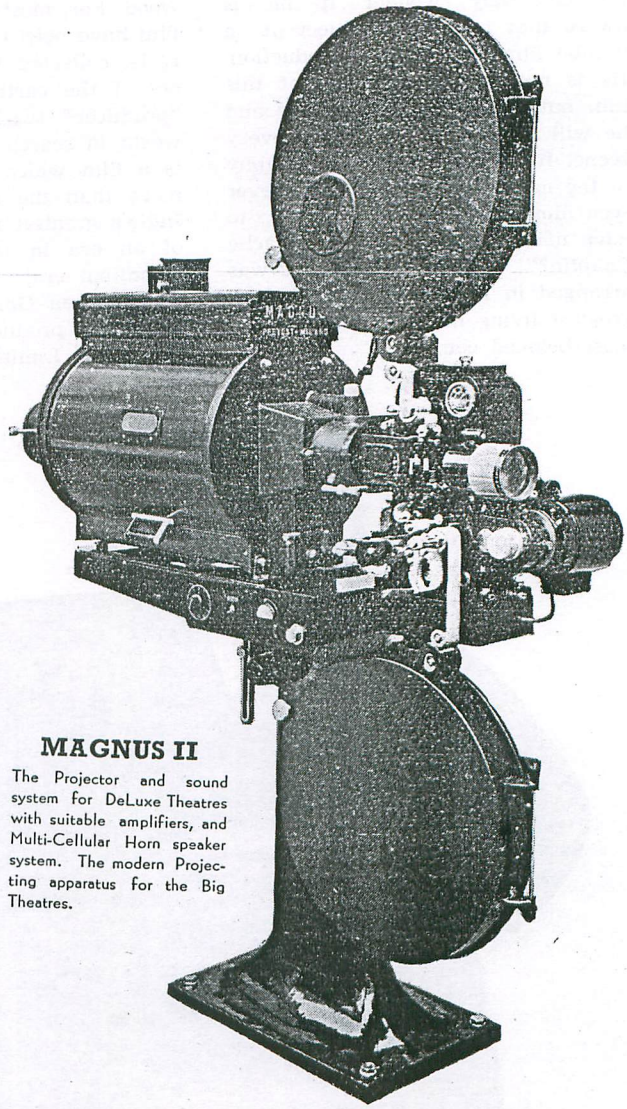

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Telegram: "SOUNDHEAD"

Mahatma Gandhi Becomes a Film Star

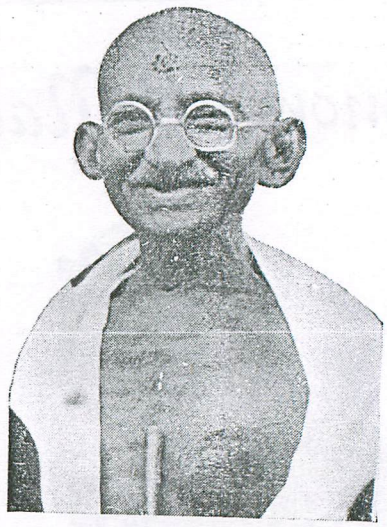
Will The Film Of The Saint Of Shegaon Break World-Records of Popularity?

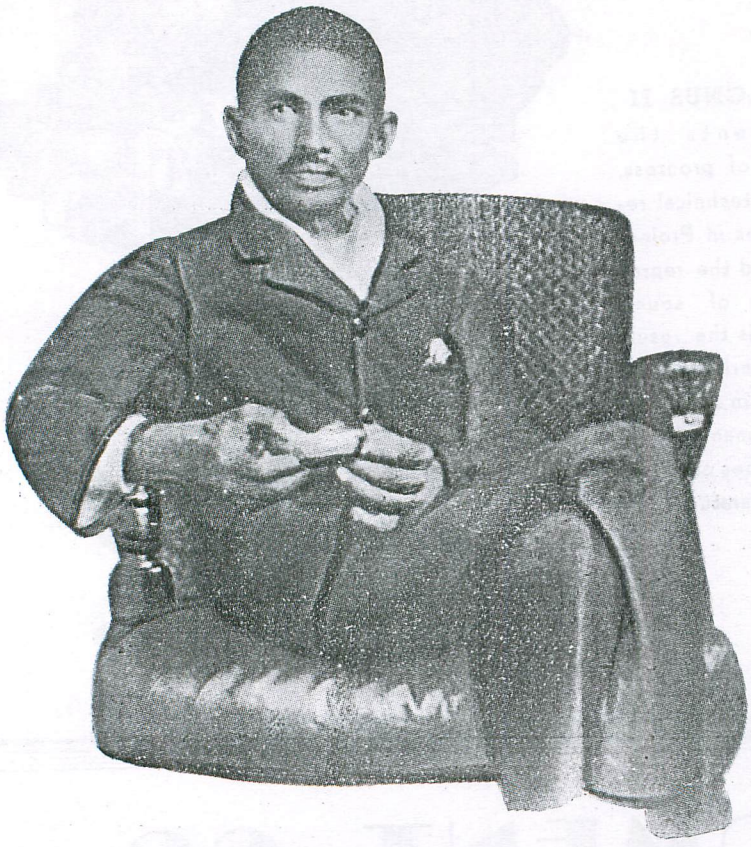
A Unique Picture of a Unique Personality

Mahatma Gandhi recently condemned the Cinema as an evil on par with gambling and liquor drinking. One may wonder if he is aware that he is the subject of a unique film now under production. He is not only the subject of this film but also the principal star and he will be seen in practically every scene. It is to be a film biography of the man who hates cinema, never sees films and who is reputed to have naively asked "Who is Charlie Chaplin?" when a meeting was arranged in London between India's greatest living man and the screen's most beloved comedian!

The "production" of this picture has taken more time than the biggest super-super-spectacle of Hollywood. For, most of the scenes in the film have been taken from old newsreels, collected from the four corners of the earth. And it took the "producer" two years to scour the world in search of them. The result is a film which is expected to be more than the screen biography of India's greatest man. It is the story of an era in Indian history—the Gandhian era!

"Mahatma Gandhi" is the first ambitious production of Documentary Films Limited, a concern floated three years ago in Madras, with the object of producing documentary films of Indian life. The original author of the scheme and the Managing Director of Documentary Films, Ltd., is A. K. Chettiar, a young South Indian.





Mahatma Gandhi—as a young barrister in Johannesburg—one of the earliest photos of the Saint of Shegaon.

Chettiar, who is a trained cinematographer and worked in the United States for a year as a newsreel cameraman for Pathe News, brought to bear upon the projected film the latest technique of making documentary pictures in the newsreel tradition. The material for the film was to be collected from all available newsreels in which Mahatma Gandhi has figured though, of course, many photographs, newspaper posters and headlines would also go into it to fill up the gaps and give a complete continuity. Only a few documentary films have hitherto been made on these lines—"Czar to Lenin" and "Three Songs of Lenin" in Soviet Russia, Bernard Shaw's "King's People" about the reign of King George V and Hemingway-Joris Ivens' "Spanish Earth."

Being shot for the picture. Romain Rolland completely associates himself with the biography of Mahatma Gandhi.

Round The World After The Mahatma

Having completed the preliminary arrangements in India, Chettiar embarked on a world tour in the course of which he travelled almost a hundred thousand miles through four continents—to places as far remote as South Africa and Finland! Wherever he could get even a scrap of a film bearing on Mahatma Gandhi's life, he went.

In the course of his tour he saw half a million feet of film from which he selected and bought fifty thousand feet. For some pieces he had to pay fancy prices, while one historical newsreel he got free from a European admirer of Mahatma Gandhi.

Some of these scenes are truly historic. The earliest newsreel 'featuring' the great man of India, for instance, comes from South Africa. It records the reception accorded to the late Mr. Gokhale when he visited Johannesburg in 1912 and was received at the pier by the Mayor and the Indian community including an Indian barrister, dressed in European clothes, named Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Of course, the pioneering newsreeler of Johannesburg had little idea that he was photographing a world personality when, in the gathering assembled to greet Mr. Gokhale, he included the obscure young Indian barrister.

The late Bal Gangadhar Tilak's funeral in Bombay, in 1920, which marked the close of a definite phase in the history of Indian nationalism, is among the earliest scenes obtained for this film.

Mahatma With The Camera

A newsreel man had accompanied the Mahatma when he made the historic voyage on s.s. *"Rajputana"* to attend the Round Table Conference and some interesting scenes of the Mahatma's life on board have been incorporated in the films. The stay in London during the Round Table Conference was, of course, fully 'covered' by newsreelers and there are some interesting scenes of the Mahatma's lodgings in East End, his visit to the industrial areas, his arrival at Buckingham Palace to attend the King's Garden Party, and his meeting with Charlie Chaplin.

On his return to India via Italy, Mahatma Gandhi had visited Rome and there is a fine film record obtained from the Cinema Department of the Government of Italy, of the world's greatest pacifist reviewing the Italian troops, standing beside the Fascist Foreign Minister!

Another interesting acquisition is the 'screen interview' that the late Mr. V. J. Patel gave in New York about Mahatma Gandhi.

Mr. Chettiar has not been merely content with obtaining relevant pieces of old newsreels. To give his film a world-wide significance he filmed a special interview with Romain Rolland, the famous French savant (whose book introduced Mahatma Gandhi to a great part of Europe) who will be seen on the screen giving his evaluation of Gandhi's role in history. Similar interviews were obtained from the well-known American writer, Patrica Kendall and Sir Radha Krishnan, the famous Indian scholar.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University also gave a "film interview" for the picture.

Romain Rolland giving a message.

To provide the background of Mahatma Gandhi's political career all the important landmarks in his life—the house where he was born, the house where he lived in Johannesburg, the Sabarmati Ashram, the Yeravada Jail, etc.,—will be seen on the screen.

At The Mahatma's Ashram

Mr. Chettiar was privileged to remain for several days in the Ashram at Shegaon and quietly filmed the daily routine of the Mahatma.

As the producers are anxious not to miss any important event in the Mahatma's contemporary political career, a cameraman of theirs is now constantly following the great man wherever he goes.

The purpose of the picture is not only to provide a film story of Gandhi's life but also to record the progress of the institutions and movements that have been inspired or influenced by Mahatma Gandhi. Thus all the sessions of the Congress during the last 15 years, the Dandi March, parades of Congress volunteers, glimpses of village industries etc., will be seen in this epic film.

Satyamurti To Comment

The film, in its Indian version, will measure about 12,000 feet but for foreign countries it will be cut down to a bare three thousand feet. To begin with, it will be released in India in three versions with commentary in Tamil, Telugu and Hindustani. The Tamil commentary will be spoken by Mr. Satyamurti, the well-known Congress leader and Mayor of Madras. There will be two different versions in English—one for U.S.A. (commentary for which will be spoken by the well-known American commentator, Lowell Thomas) and the other for the rest of the English-speaking world. Chettiar himself may fly to America with a copy to show it first, if possible to President Roosevelt.

Mr. Satyamurti

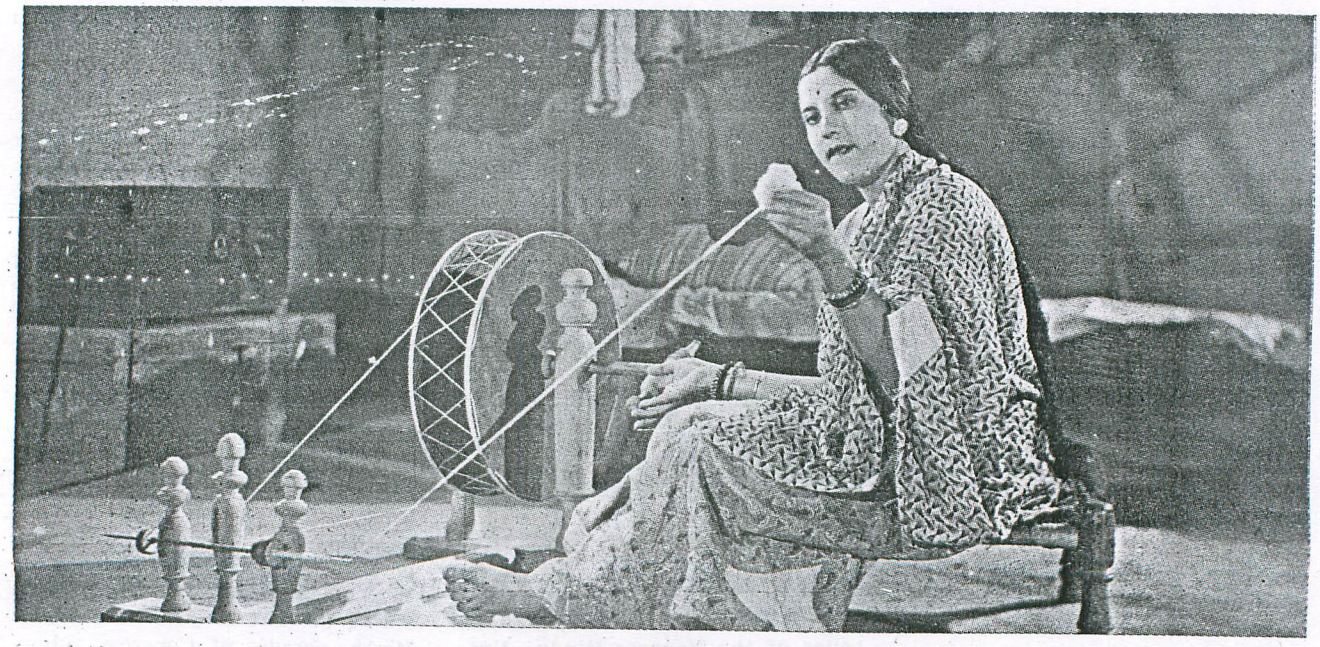
Moti—Paramount star in "Amazon"

The Documentary Films Ltd., have offers from most European countries including Sweden, Finland, Italy, etc., to release this film in those countries in the respective native languages. If the war does not interfere with the plans, the films will be seen throughout the world in as many as 21 languages! which, I believe, will establish a record in the history of film production.

Gandhi Song in Poland.

In the course of his world tour, to collect material for this picture, Mr. A. K. Chettiar has collected a vast mass of "Gandhiana"—rare, old photographs, newspaper clippings legends and stories. He will tell you, for instance, that in Poland they have a popular song about Gandhi and that the largest number of books on the Mahatma's life are to be found in the New York public library.

The film which, at the moment, is being edited in Bombay is expected to be ready for release in India by the end of April. After completion the producers hope to be able to show it to Mahatma Gandhi and get his approval for it before showing it to the general public. Will the first film seen by Mahatma Gandhi be "MAHATMA GANDHI" starring Mahatma Gandhi?



The old favourite at a new job. Padmadevi in association with Jamuna, leads an important cast in "Hindusthan Hamara" a Film Corporation Picture in the able hands of Mr. Ram Daryani.

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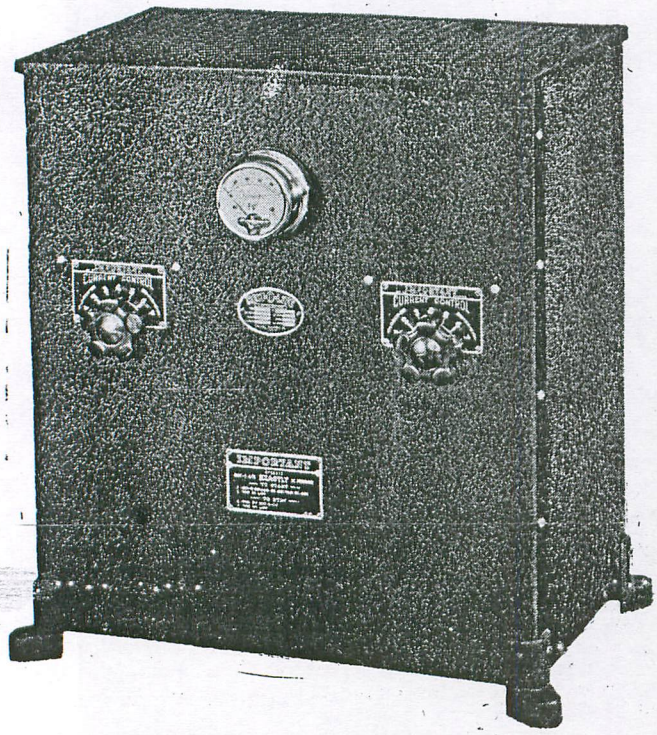

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ROUND The TOWN

Mahatma Gandhi's Immortal Words Inspire A Picture— "Mud" Draws Crowds At Pathe — "Mazi Ladki" For Light Entertainment.

MUD

Producers: Hindusthan Cinetone —Story: S. H. Manto--Dialogues: S. Khalil—Songs: Indra and Safdar---Photography: S. Hardip--Sound: B. M. Shah--Editing: Narayan Rao—Processing: M. S. Marathe---Direction: Gunjal—Cast: Shobhana Samarth, Nazir, Jayant, Madhvi, Shanta Dutt, Singh etc.,---Released at: Pathe Cinema, Bombay—Date of Release: 27th January 1940.

"The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized."

"I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can only earn by the sweat of their brow."

These immortal lines of Mahatma Gandhi written on the 13th October 1921, have become the subject matter of this picture now after nearly nineteen years.

It was left to Mr. Nanubhai B. Desai, himself a great devotee of the Indian saint, to produce a story on these lines and with such an eloquent effect.

IS LABOUR SO HAPPY?

The picture opens with the theme song sung by several labourers of a brick factory. The atmosphere of perfect happiness, a little unconvincing though, which is prevalent at the brick factory is soon disturbed by quite a trivial accident in which Sushila, the daughter of the fatory owner meets with a small accident which ruins her fashionable 'sari' and toilet. The labourer responsible for this, Keshav, takes an almost unwarranted and illogical attitude and assumes an arrogance towards the girl with such a sudden vehemance that one wonders whether labour should be humble and have its proverbial dignity.

However, the proverbial dignity of labour is soon expresed by a flood of strong epithets against the rich released by Keshav who seems to need only a slight breeze to get his tongue wagging.

Veteran Nanubhai Desai once again becomes the front page news with his new production 'Mud".

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

And yet the little accident, though unconvincing, helps to introduce Prithvi, Keshav's friend who is also a labourer. Through the usual filmic misunderstanding, Prithvi gets the punishment for Keshav's fault but that helps Prithvi to fall in love with Sushila.

Then the booklet tells us that "the town was over-ridden by plague." On the screen, however, we don't see the frightful ravages of the plague, but one of the characters a doctor, says that Sushila.

S. H. Manto, the author of "Mud"

the heroine is attacked with the plague. It is evident that the director did not wish to waste unnecessary footage on the plague and he expected the audience to indulge in its own imagination realizing the fact that as the heroine of the story was attacked, the plague must be taken as serious.

Due to this gap in pictorial presentation, the subsequent action of Prithvi in going to Sushila and nursing her through her dangerous illness at the risk of his own life looks a little tame.

Sushila's father, during her illness, himself becomes ill and dies leaving Shambu an old "friend" of the family as the chief executor of the huge estates and guardian of Sushila.

When Sushila recovers, she finds the rustic Prithvi in her room and is shocked with the ultimate result that Shambu throws him out of the house and into the world.

THE INEVITABLE RECIPROCATION!

Prithvi takes to the time-worn path of drinks and vice and becomes a gangster. By an accident, Sushila learns what Prithvi had done for her and how much he loved her and suddenly she finds a reciprocative feeling in her own heart.

This new love gives her a new sight and she finds out the villainy of Shambu, who had trickfully obtained control of her money and was now threatening to marry her.

At this stage, Keshav comes out with his philosophy of labour and convinces Sushila that she must live with the poor to realize the injustice of their existence. They

both decide to search for Prithvi who is found in a grog shop and after numerous incidents is at last restored to the waiting arms of Sushila.

At places the treatment of the story is admirable and particularly the theme sequences between Sushila and Keshav attain a very high intellectual standard and sometimes their very intensity helps to cover a lot of other faults due to illogical suddenness of certain reactions.

ALAS, FOR A DIRECTOR

In the hands of a better director, a subject like this with its heavy sprinkling of emotion and its bedrock of deeper intellectual understanding, would have become an immortal screen document of the vicissitudes of labour. But Gunjal in my opinion is not expected to understand the true significance of such a theme. Within his own limitations, the director however, has improved on his previous effort.

Beautiful photography—exceptionally so at several places—takes the first vote of the audience. But at places it intrudes on the story because the director has chosen to give a screen album of the different poses of the heroine.

And yet, after all done and said I think "Mud" is still a very good picture for its theme, treatment, photography, and performances.

By all means, don't miss it. "Mud" is worth two visits, as it is a picture with a definite social significance for all.

And it was a good day when the producer decided to film a subject like this.

Mazhar Khan, our versatile artiste will now be seen in Circo Productions' "Suhag".

Now he will get some rare sound tests which few husbands like to record. P. C. Subedar, the popular recording engineer of Ranjit was recently married with almost the entire film industry to witness the happy occasion.

MAZI LADKI (Marathi)

Producers: Saraswati Cinetone —Story and Dialogues: Madhavrao Joshi—Music: Patwardhan—Direction: Dadasaheb Torney—Photography: Purohit and Shinde—Audiography: Patil and Jadhav—Cast: Jayshree, Ratnamala, Pandit, Dinker etc.,—Released at: Majestic Cinema, Bombay—Date of Release: 13th January 1940.

The recent popularity of social comedies has probably encouraged the production of this picture. Though the story opens in bright surroundings, it soon takes a pathetic turn and descends to the levels of a thriller.

Ramesh, a young scholar, is being obviously wooed by Rao Bahadur Chandrasekar to obtain his consent to marriage with his daughter Rajani. Rajani is a hot modern one and is in no hurry to get herself shackled.

Sadhubhau Bhole is a political suspect and runs away leaving his young daughter Sarala in charge of Wamanrao. Wamanrao soon develops intentions against her. The girl who is now transported to the city life, meets people and tries to take up the city smartness.

She meets Ramesh at Rajani's house and falls in love with her. Wamanrao of course tries his best to prevent this love affair, but all his attempts are ultimately foiled by Sarala's father who suddenly becomes a free man.

Intended as a comedy, the picture ends as a social melodrama. The direction is appropriate, though a little more care in editing would have added speed to certain sequences. Photography is pleasant. Recording, however, called for more care.

Jayshree gives a good performance as a new comer to the screen and gives a confident promise of a brilliant future. Dinker steals several scenes with his slapstick performance.

"Quite a good one to make you laugh and be pleased with yourself" seems to be the general vote of the audience.

Ishwarlal, the superb-actor, plays an important part in "India to-day" a Ranjit picture.

GORAKHNATH or Alakh Niranjan

Producers: Arun Pictures—Story and Direction: Bhal G. Pendharkar — Hindi version: Anand Kumar—Music: Koregaonker---Art Director: Bal Gajbar—Photography: Sazu Naik—Recording: C. B. Modak; Cast: Leela Chandragiri, Vimal Sardesai, Kamla Bakula, Chandrakant, B. Nandrekar etc.—Released at Central Cinema, Bombay—Date of Release: 2nd March 1940.

Here is some old wine in a new bottle. But the flavouring is so novel that one almost forgets to recognize it as an old favourite.

Bhal G. Pendharkar, who has always specialized in mythological phantasises and historical yarns, has once again brought to screen an ever popular subject treated this time with his usual masterly technique. "It is certainly better than his "Gopichand" said the critics when they saw a special press show. And "Gopichand" was itself a great success.

"ALAKH NIRANJAN"

With those familiar words "Alakh Niranjan" embedded in a thrilling song, the picture opens with Gorakh in the streets on his usual rounds for alms. Very soon we are introduced to the mysticism of Guru Macchindra whose philosophy of toning the walls of the soul to ward off temptation in life is soon put to test.

Pandit Indra, perhaps the most popular song and dialogue writer of Bombay makes more news by writing "Sawan" a film story for Sudama Productions.

In refreshing contrast to the long accepted yarn of Gorakh coming to an Amazon Kingdom and hurling himself in the midst of a crowd of seductive girls, the author-director has taken a more philosophic and sober view of realistic life and created a new portrayal in the character of Mangala who while burning within her the eternal flame of love, is still unable to quench the human thirst which this glow creates.

A SUBTLE BLEND

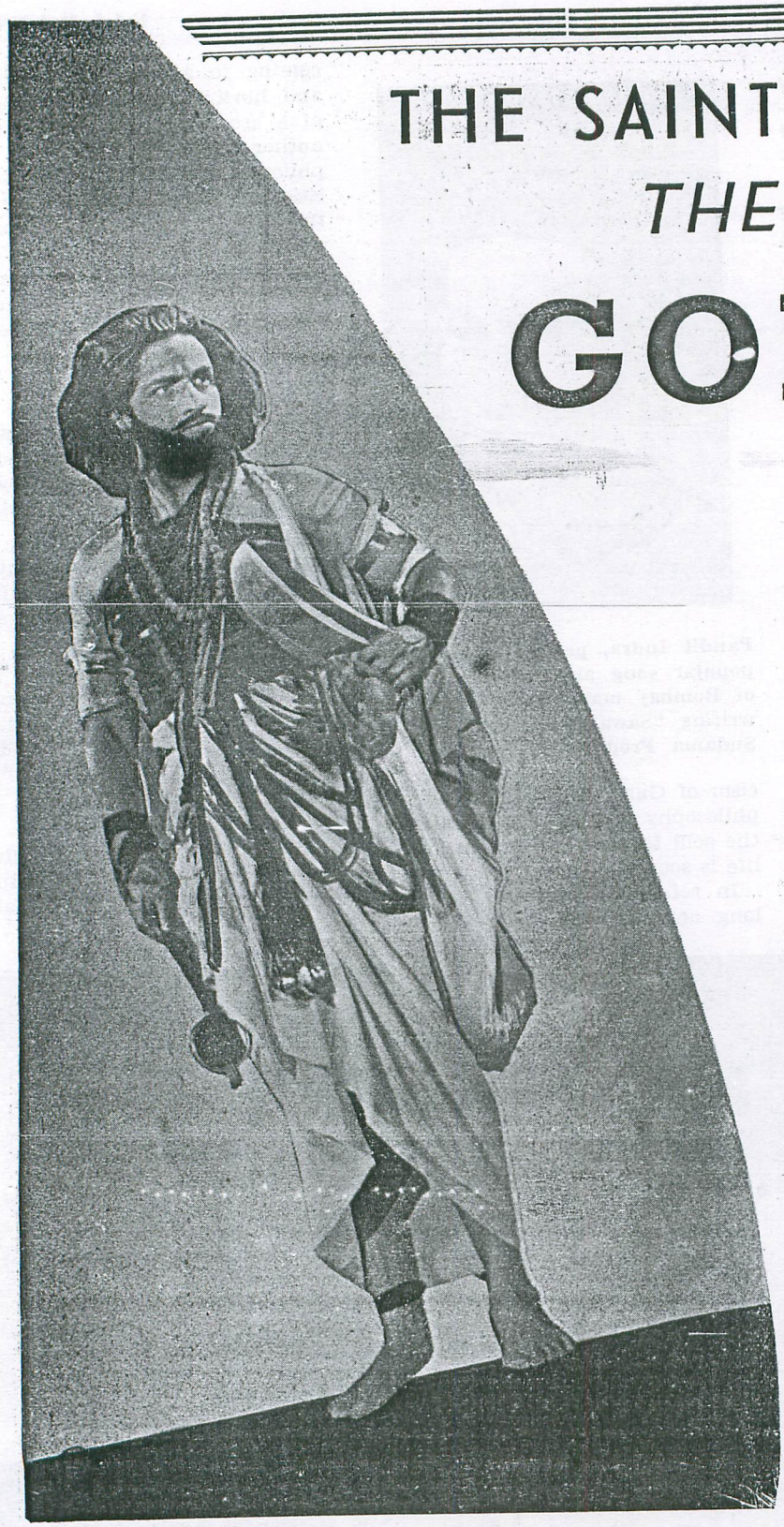
Sequences after sequences now overlap one another, in which philosophy, life, mysticism and instruction are subtly blended by the author with the supreme artistry of a very good film director.

The picture has, in consequence, become a very fine entertaining film with excellent photography and beautiful performances.

Leela Chandragiri, with her distinctly sweet voice, sings a couple of popular tunes and in addition gives a performance which adds to her already big reputation as a good artiste. The dialogues are pretty and appropriate.

It is a picture, which a director has created with a superb screen vision, and is certainly worth seeing.

Leela Chitnis and Ashok Kumar in Bombay Talkies "Kangan" still popular at the Roxy.



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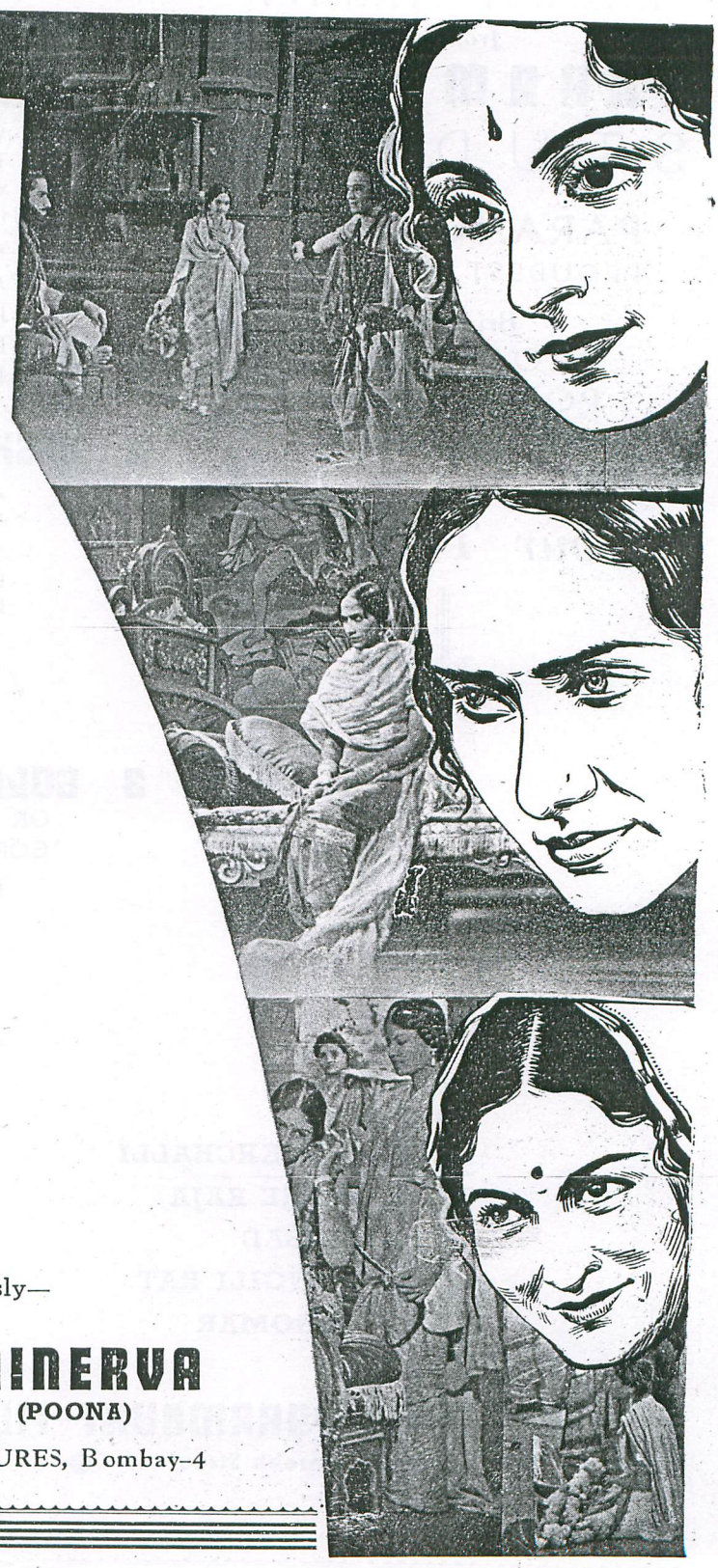

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Kamal, Bakula & others in

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(Marathi)

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A couple from the country — Lured by the city rich

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A modern social With heart appeal, hilarity and suspense
Every inch of it.

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OR
GORAKHDHANDA

It is simply gun-fire, speed and hilarity.

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The peasant's march
To freedom and recognition
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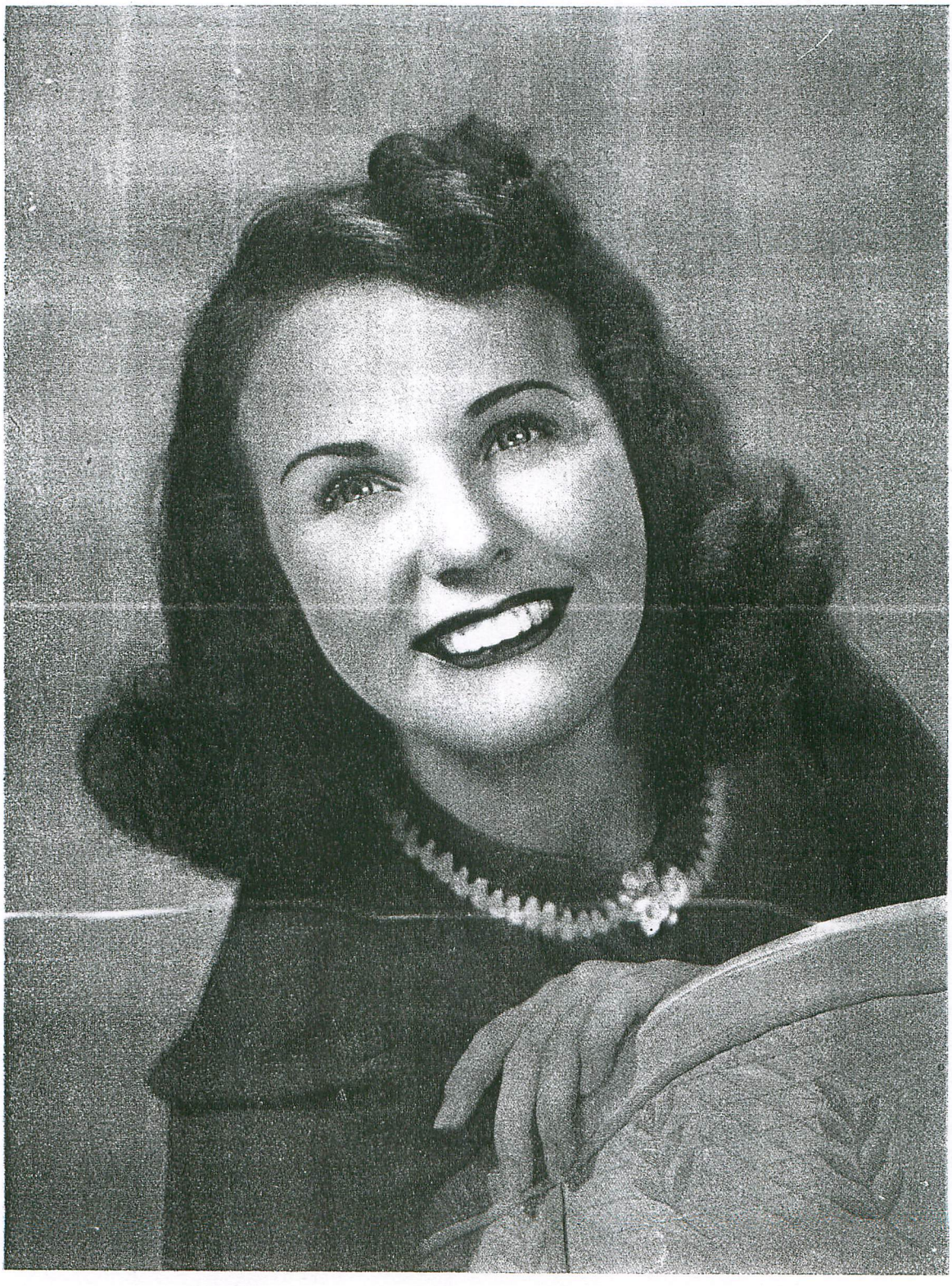


DEANNA DURBIN—This famous Universal star earns new laurels in "First Love" evidently only a screen romance

**LION HAS WINGS
(A Korda Film)

Feturing: Merle Oberon

Quite a clever documentary which helps to pile up more and more evidence against Hitler. The topical shots taken from time to time are very effectively edited and assembled to make an impressive story.

Up to the interval the picture is definitely interesting and informative. After the interval an attempt to put in a lame romance compromises the documentary value of the picture and does not help to add any human interest.

If you want to know how the present war started and what part Hitler played in it, see this picture. The presentation is of course through the British eyes.

**THE CAT & THE CANARY
(Paramount)

Featuring: Bob Hope, Paulette, Goddard and John Beal.

A spooky melodrama with crime as the motive. The entire atmosphere of mystery and expectation is well worked out and till the last moment it becomes difficult to find the criminal. What is really clever about the picture is the element of comedy mixed with the supporting horror.

Quite a good entertainment for the adults, but I doubt whether the sensitive children should see this one.

*REMEMBER (M. G. M.)

Featuring: Robert Taylor, Lew Ayres, Billie Burke, Greer Garson etc.

In the American language it is a "lousy" picture. It has no human interest and fails even to entertain. It is based on phantastic idea of losing memory of the past. Incidentally, the audience also forgets the picture with equal ease and the story built round a potion, itself becomes a potion for the spectators.

The attempt to give a sophisticated comedy is both clumsy and ridiculous.

**FIRST LOVE (Universal)

Featuring: Deanna Durbin. Others don't count.

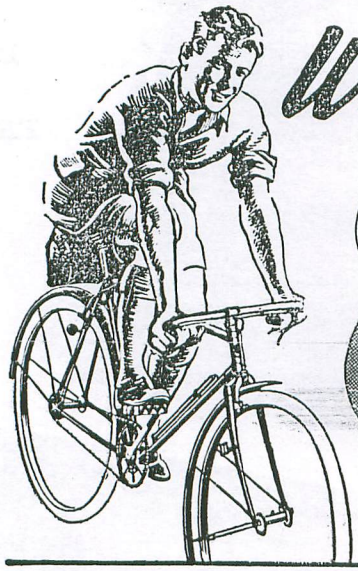
A modern Cindrella stuff produced in lavish settings—more lavish than before; the picture has some human appeal and is amusing in parts. Deanna's classic singing gets on the nerves. Many among the audience show as if they like it, but I doubt whether they even understand it.

Deanna's personality and performance are as refreshing as before. Quite a good picture for the Durbin fans.

**HONEYMOON IN BALI
(Paramount)

Featuring: Madeleine Carroll and Fred McMurray.

Pretty good entertainment is provided by this sophisticated comedy. Witty dialogues, good performances and fine settings contributes to the polish of the story. The dialogues at places are however too suggestive and therefore make the picture unsuitable for children.



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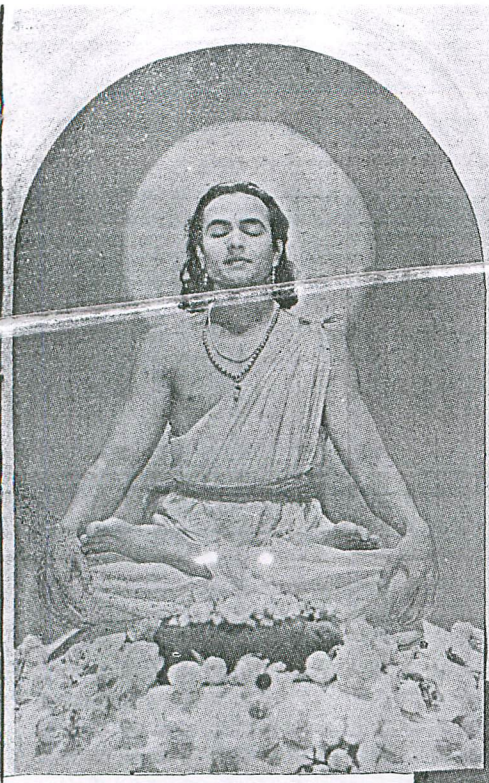
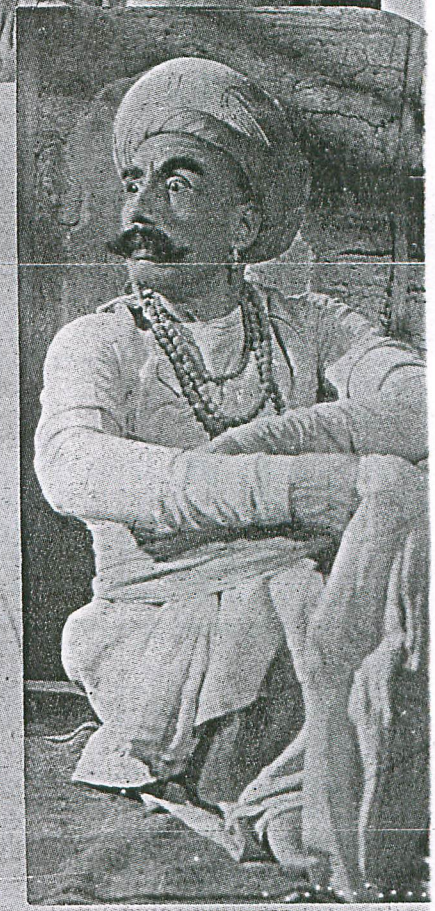
Directors

DAMLE & FATEHLAL





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FANS! WHERE ARE YOUR MANNERS?

A Plea For Less Vulgarity In Expressions of Admiration

By K. AHMAD ABBAS

Pity the Bombay postmen who have to (literally) bear the burden of the tons and tons of fan mail that pours in every day for the popular stars of the screen!

This fan mail, I once imagined, was an encouraging evidence of the increasing intelligent interest taken by the Indian cinegoers in our films and in the work of our artistes. Since then I have had the doubtful privilege of going through the fan mail of at least two of the most popular stars in Bombay—a leading lady and a leading man. I have had also the opportunity of looking at some of the three thousand and odd letters that pour in at the "Filmindia" offices every month. I really pity the postmen who have to carry and deliver very often some stupid vulgar and futile correspondence.

"Evidence of the increasing intelligent interest taken by the Indian cine-goers"? If anything they often provide conclusive evidence of the utter bad taste and abysmal ignorance of the people who write them!

There are exceptions, of course. In one out of a hundred fan letters, a star will come across a really intelligent appreciation—or criticism. And I can tell you that a surprisingly large number of our leading artistes would much prefer a sensible letter condemning their work to the obviously insincere mass of flattery that they receive every day followed by the inevitable demand for an autographed photo. And they would give anything to see that the letters they receive do not traverse the bounds of good taste and, while seeking to praise, do not actually insult them.

"COME AND DANCE AT MY WEDDING"

Here is an example which I quote because it is typical of the general attitude of many fans who persist in entertaining false illusions of the life and status of cinema stars. A college boy of 20 (He mentioned the age in the letter) wrote to a famous film star, a respectable married lady belonging to a very cultured and honoured family, asking her **how much she would charge for going and dancing at his marriage!!!** I cannot imagine of a worse insult. Again and again I have been disgusted to read similar suggestions which arise out of the patently false and mischievous notion that film stars are no better than dancing girls who can be hired for a marriage **"jalsa"**. It is such narrow-minded, snobbish attitude towards film artistes that is responsible for many educated and cultured girls hesitating to take up a screen career. And in the interest of a healthier atmosphere in the Indian film industry, let us once for all debunk and ruthlessly expose persons who betray such a low mentality.

STUDY IN PSYCHOLOGY

It is a study in human psychology—and, sometimes, physiology, too!—to read these letters. Professions of love, declarations of devotion, proposals of marriage, suggestions for amorous adventures, confessions of sexual abnormalities,—these are but a few manifestations of this silly craze. "I can't live without you." "I always dream of you." "You are my soul-mate." "Let us run away together." "I crave for your kisses." The letters are liberally splashed with such purple passages. The poetic sentimentalism of the East is blended with the pornography of the West to produce this literature of love!

In a way I can sympathize with the people (There are women, too, among them) who indulge in this stupid pastime. Living in a taboo-ridden society, sex-starved, denied the opportunities of healthy companionship, leading a colourless, drab life and fed on lies and half-truths about the life and character of people in the film line, it is not strange that they tend to seek an emotional outlet through such postal love-making to their favourite stars. I can understand the psychological origin of this madness but in no case can I condone exhibitions of bad taste. Even silly infatuation should not be expressed in vulgar terms.

Some of them (who are often vain enough to enclose their photographs) perhaps actually believe that these letters may lead to real adventures. "I am the son of a millionaire." "I have two cars of my own." "I can give you a diamond necklace." These are the baits often dangled before the 'victims' of their attentions.

ARRIVED WITH BAG AND BAGGAGE!

Nor is this craze restricted to writing letters. Indeed, letters are comparatively harmless as the star need not pay any attention to them beyond a cursory glance and, if possible, the despatch of an autographed photo which sometimes satisfies and sometimes further inflames the fan's amorous instincts. Much more troublesome and embarrassing are the fans who pester the stars with personal attentions. I know of one case when a man travelled all the way from Punjab and, somehow finding the address of a certain lady star's home, arrived there with his trunk and created quite a scene by demanding to be accommodated there.

The number of people who seek interviews with stars by various tricks is legion. A fan once actually posed as a salesman to gain admittance to a star's presence and then lost his nerve and could not carry on with the deception. Many of them can be seen loitering near the gates of studios, anxious to have a glimpse of some star and in Calcutta one such enthusiast actually tried to commit suicide by stabbing to impress his favourite.

Men are naturally more venturesome but recently a few cases have come to my knowledge where some women, too, have made a nuisance of themselves. A young and handsome hero of a Bombay studio was terribly embarrassed and annoyed by a series of letters from a woman in U. P. who constantly threatened to come and live with him as his mistress. Another leading man once received a visit from a woman who calmly announced that she was going to live with him. Fortunately for him, his wife and mother were living with him and, on seeing them, she immediately fled.

TELEPHONE FIENDS

Then there is that variety of well-to-do fans in Bombay who, with nothing else to do, keep on phoning to every star whose number they can manage to find. Life has been made miserable for some of the stars and no device seems to be able to save them from this menace. Even in their sleep they are constantly disturbed by their unseen, unknown "admirers" and to some of them the telephone bell comes to assume the grim ring of the knell of doom!

Sometimes I think there is a streak of sadism somewhere in the psychology of these fans. Or else why should they always seek to annoy and cause trouble to those they are supposed to admire and adore. Take the recent case of the fiasco at the receptions given to Saigal in Bombay. The two thousand students who had gathered in the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall were presumably all Saigal fans. And yet by their rowdy behaviour they caused nothing but serious annoyance to the unfortunate star who was suffering from a sore-throat and was clearly unable to oblige them with a song. Nor was this the first occasion when our Collegians have caused such fiascos. The same thing often happens at other meetings and shows. It is surprising that students who are believed to represent the intelligentsia among cine-goers should repeatedly give evidence of such deplorable lack of good manners.

Renuka Devi with her three little daughters: Shabnam, Lubna, and Sumbul—perhaps three future stars of our screen.

I have already indicated how social environment and emotional frustration in the lives of people causes them to take such abnormal interest in film stars. The phenomenon is not peculiar to India. Indeed, in the West—particularly in England—the mass-adoration of stars has reached such limits that on his recent visit to England Robert Taylor was almost killed in a stampede of women anxious to kiss or at least to touch him. They went to the extent of tearing his clothes in order to secure a fragment as a keep-sake. All kinds of tricks are done to get the attention of one's screen idols. There is the classic example of the love sick American who got himself packed in a trunk and mailed to a certain star. By the time the trunk reached its destination the man was almost dead.

WIFE VERSUS KANANBALA

There is something inherent in the star-system, the foundation of the capitalistic edifice of film-production, which causes these aberrations. With a view to persuading the cine-goers to see their films, irrespective of their artistic merit, the stars are given on the screen—and also otherwise through publicity—super-glamourized personalities. (The contrast is provided by Kathakali dancers who use masks so that physical attraction may not prejudice the appreciation of unadulterated art.)

The movies have a way not only of presenting artificiality realistically but they have also the power of projecting the star personalities beyond the screen right into our lives, so that when Loretta Young or Claudette Colbert smiles in a close-up, each one of those in the audience has a feeling she is smiling exclusively for him. Therein lies the power as well as the danger of the star-system. The cine-goer soon becomes a fan and the fan before long is a devotee, nursing a personal attachment for

In the midst of an interesting talk: Mr. Einfeld, Baburao Patel, Lya Lees and Harry Warner at the Warner Studios in Hollywood.

the favourite screen idol in him or her heart. This results, on the one hand, in this crazy idolization of stars, often expressed violently and vulgarly, and on the other hand, it causes considerable dissatisfaction and frustration in the lives of the weak-minded and easily susceptible cine fans. The homely wife loses all charm because she is not so glamorous as Loretta Young or Kananbala!

NO BEAUTY QUEENS HERE

As the first step towards saving the souls of these poor creatures let us debunk this legend of screen beauty. I have seen several Hollywood stars and practically all important Indian stars in actual life and I can say that not one of them looks the same in real life as she does on the screen. This is more true of Hollywood because there the art of make-up, abetted by clever lighting and camera angles, can turn any plain-looking girl into a stunning beauty queen or a glamour girl.

In India, too, as make-up and photography improve, sophisticated glamour is being artificially produced. Most of our stars are nice to meet in private life, charming and friendly, more intellectual than some journalists, more human than many doctors, better-behaved than most mill-owners, more intelligent than a number of lawyers. But, as far as purely physical beauty is concerned, I would not care to put them up in a Beauty Competition. They—except a few exceptions—have risen to stardom not because of good looks but because of dramatic talent and, in some cases, singing ability.

A friend of mine was enamoured of the beauty of a certain star—until he saw her in private life with her thick glasses and far from fair complexion! But that has not detracted from his admiration for her talent. Indeed, now he respects her more as an artiste. I wish I could similarly disillusion some more people into a more rational appreciation of films and film stars.

GOOD MANNERS ESSENTIAL

The best tribute fans can pay to their favourites is to regard them as human beings like themselves, who have to work hard like those in any other profession, who have neither the time nor the inclination to respond to all the fantastic emotional claims made upon them by their fans. Decently-worded fan letters, requests for autographed photos, crowds at premiers—these are legitimate methods of expressing the cine-goers' appreciation. But to pester the stars with indecent suggestions, to expect them to respond to amorous advances, to annoy them with anonymous telephone calls or to shout and be rowdy at public meetings where some stars happen to be present—surely this is the limit of stupidity, of cheapness and of bad taste. To express one's appreciation as to express one's love, one needs good manners.

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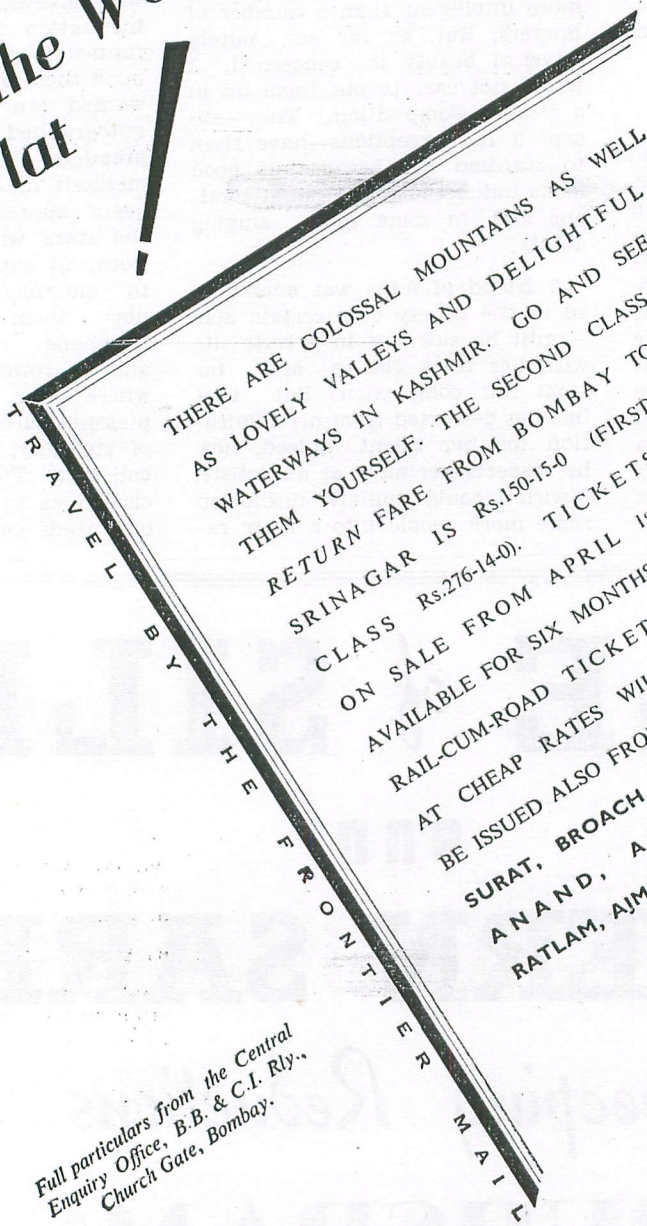

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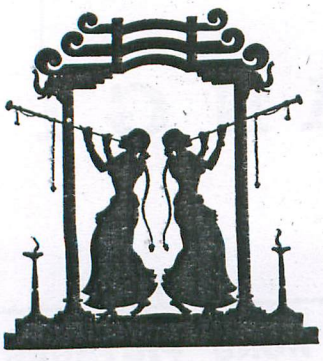

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For The Technicians

WE APPEAL TO THE CRITIC

(Continued from our last issue)

By The Editor

Bulletin of the Association of Cine-Technicians

In our last issue we had dealt with the inadequate and even meaningless criticism that some of our so-called critics level at us. In the case of the laboratorian, because so little is known of him and his work they have found a willing target for a host of ills that cannot be assigned to another quarter. They have accused him of changing night sequences into day and vice versa, of introducing unwanted sounds or of eliminating the desirable ones, and generally if the cameraman or the sound engineer happens to be otherwise a consistent workman, 'to have lowered the usual high level of his work.' About such critics we do not wish to say a word.

As we have said before, to the fair and conscientious we bow our heads and to him alone we make this appeal. And we believe that such a critic will necessarily have a detailed knowledge of that which he is out to criticise. Of course, no one can deny the usual excuse that one's inability to execute something as efficiently does not take away from one's capacity to criticise the way some one else does that something. But it is also true that he who criticises must not exhibit in his criticism a lack of knowledge of at least the fundamental principles of our work.

For instance, while criticising the unusually weak technique of a recent picture, some one said that the cameraman at places did not use the proper lenses to photograph the foreground figures and the backgrounds in the proper light and focal balance. We know and the critic must know too, that such a lens does not exist, and the effect that led that some one to make his observation was probably due to faulty lighting.

IS THE CRITIC JUSTIFIED?

And now we come to yet another aspect of criticism—let us for a moment admit that our critic has the exact knowledge as to what is exactly wrong. Is he to point them all out? We are afraid we can scarcely stop him. But again if the purpose of his criticism is constructive, a certain amount of choice is necessary. There are mistakes which just happen and which we regret the very next moment, but because of certain defects in studio organisation they cannot be rectified and are allowed to pass. We refer to little mechanical mistakes of camera and sound manipulation, little in themselves, it is true, but detracting nevertheless from the usual standard of our work. We would certainly appeal to the critic to spare us these and to confine himself to that portion of our work which for want of a better word we will call as 'artistry.'

A slightly out of focus scene may be due to a little grit on the lens which the assistant may have failed to clean just before the take, or it may be due to faulty taping by the second assistant, but all the same the effect of an otherwise brilliant piece of lighting is destroyed. Or it may be that the camera became slightly noisy and its sound was reproduced as a slight background to an otherwise faultless piece of recording. It may even be possible that owing to some slight mechanical breakdown in the laboratory some piece of extraordinary photographic or sound quality got damaged and scratched. And this very negative was so indispensable that it could not be removed and it finally appeared on the screen a black spot against an otherwise capable cinematographer and audiographer.

We appeal to you, as a well-meaning critic, proud of the industry you are helping to build up, whether you are going to hold this up against this particular worker or you will pardon him, bidding him be more careful in the future. Mistakes like this will happen, and it is not always in our hands to remedy them. If the blame has to be laid on some one it must be on the system of production that allows such obvious and glaring pieces of defective workmanship to be passed for exhibition. Our fault, if any, lies in being a part of this system.

(Contd. on page 64)

Leela leads the others in "Gorakhnath" an Arun Picture.

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RUSSIA'S GOLLYWOOD

Where The Cinema is Really The "Working Man's University"

By D. G. TENDULKAR

It was in 1930 that I saw the first Soviet film—"Battleship Potemkin." The audience consisting of the Cambridge students, dons and professors, forgetting their politics for the moment, hailed the red sailors of the battleship, as if they were part and parcel of the Odessa crowd. No wonder that this film was once considered so dangerous in London that instant imprisonment was threatened to anyone who showed a foot of it, even privately. This film created in me real and lasting interest in the cinema, and was instrumental in my going for cinematographic studies to Moscow—the Soviet Gollywood (as pronounced in h-less Russian), and the abode of Eisenstein and Pudovkin.

The vitality of the Soviet cinema is one of the wonders of the world. In less than half a dozen years it has caught up with and surpassed the work of Hollywood, Berlin and Paris. With an export of perhaps a dozen films, it has impressed upon the audience of five continents an individuality that is impossible to forget. The true Soviet cinema broke clean across the world with "Potemkin", and now even the enemies of its policy recognise its achievement, while those who have been looking forward to America, Germany and France for the lead, have found in this new dynamic cinema the most complete approximation to real cinema art.

WORLD-WIDE INTEREST

The Soviet cinema is marching forward, influencing on its way, movies from America and Europe. "Kameradschaft", "All Quiet on the Western Front", "Emile Zola," "Confessions of a Nazi Spy"—just to mention a few are examples of the generously making use of this effective technique. The powerful documentary film movement in England under able directors like Grierson, Basil Wright and Ivor Montagu, is a direct result of the influence of the Soviet films. India, unfortunately, has had no opportunity to witness the classics of the Soviet film art, for reasons known to those who have scuttled "Juarez."

The October Revolution (1917) found the Russian film industry in as dilapidated a state as it found Russian economy and expression in general. The Russian cinema had, before the war, produced about two dozen films a year. The production was vulgar and far behind the European and American cinema.

At the very moment of the Revolution the positive value of cinema

Mr. D. G. Tendulkar

was recognised. In a few years the entire cinema industry was handed over to the People's Commissariate of Education throughout U.S.S.R., by a decree issued by Lenin in 1919. "Polikushka", a true picture of the Russian peasantry, by Leo Tolstoy, was the inaugural production. Lenin urged to take the best from the cultural heritage of the past, critically analyse it in the building up of the new culture.

FILMING HISTORY

Decisive battles were in progress (1919), on all fronts of the Civil War. Cinema workers took film records of the episodes of Civil War, Soviet festivals, demonstrations, struggles against famine and ruin—of all the joys and sorrows of the young Republic. The heroes of their chronicle were the masses. "Film them", Lenin once said, pointing to the workers and peasants, "for they are making history." Most of the veteran Soviet cinema workers got their first training during the days that shook the world.

NOT "PURE ENTERTAINMENT"

Soviet Russia never considered cinema as pure entertainment. It is part of carefully planned educational campaign, with greater social cooperation as its chief aim. The best brains in the land are employed to further this aim, and have succeeded in devising a forceful technique.

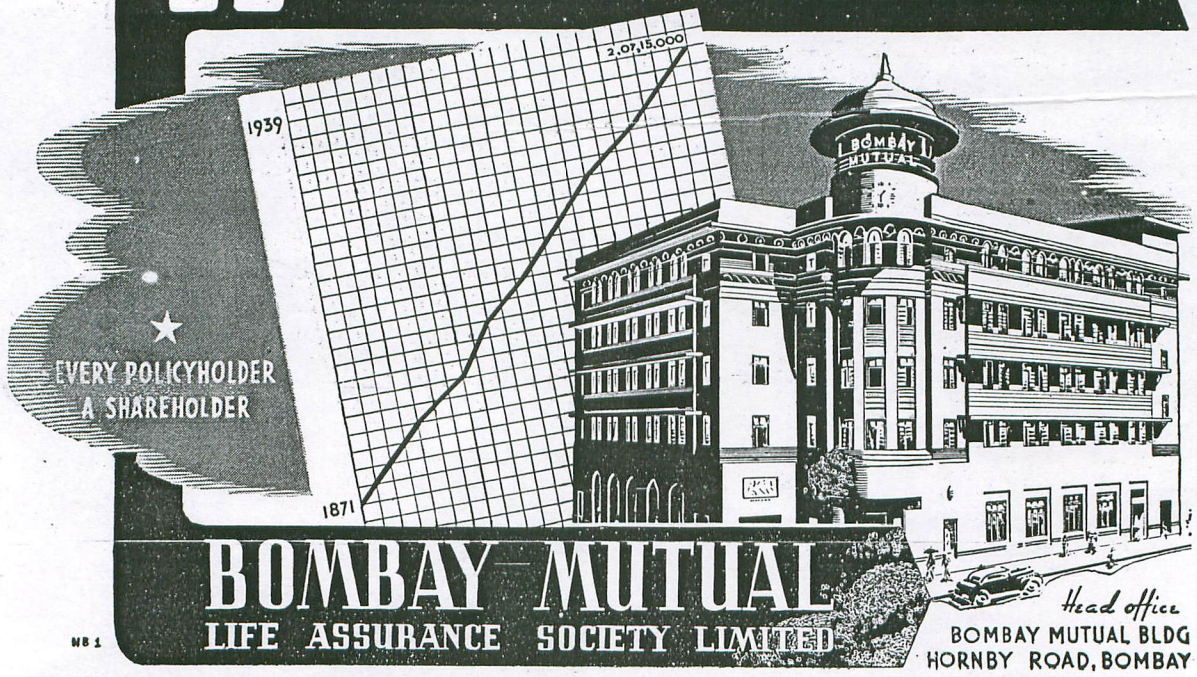
The Soviet cinema has had tough ground to break. The old technique favoured the exploitation of stars and heroes; the new need is to put on the screen the urgencies of the masses. "I have a hero—now almost by definition one thinks of a hero as a man alone, struggling against opposing forces. In socialist society becoming a hero is a beginning of a man's tragedy, because he cannot work alone" epitomizes Pudovkin, on making a Soviet hero.

Kuleshov, with whom Pudovkin was associated in his first enterprises was a pioneer with the pointer. He called attention to a self-evident fact, known in practice but not in principle; that the film is a progression composed of intensive units. The progressive composition is edited into existence. The French used a theatrical term, montage, which was rendered international by the Russians.

Till the Soviets came into the field, the condition of the film production, may be compared to the state of animal breeding before 1900. Directors like Chaplin obtained results worthy certainly of unrestrained admiration. But they have not attained results by conscious paths, or more properly by the exercise of princi-

(*Contd. on page 59*)

69 YEARS OF PROGRESS



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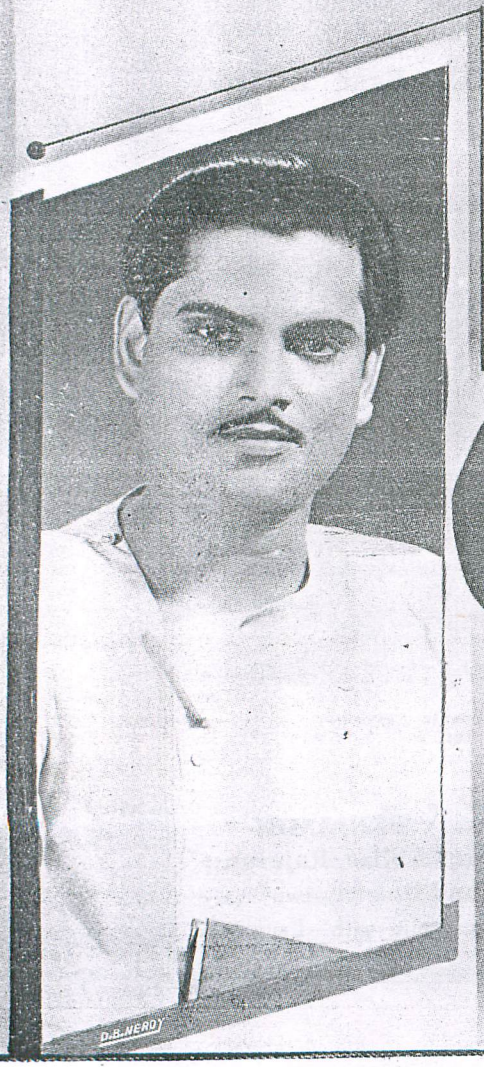

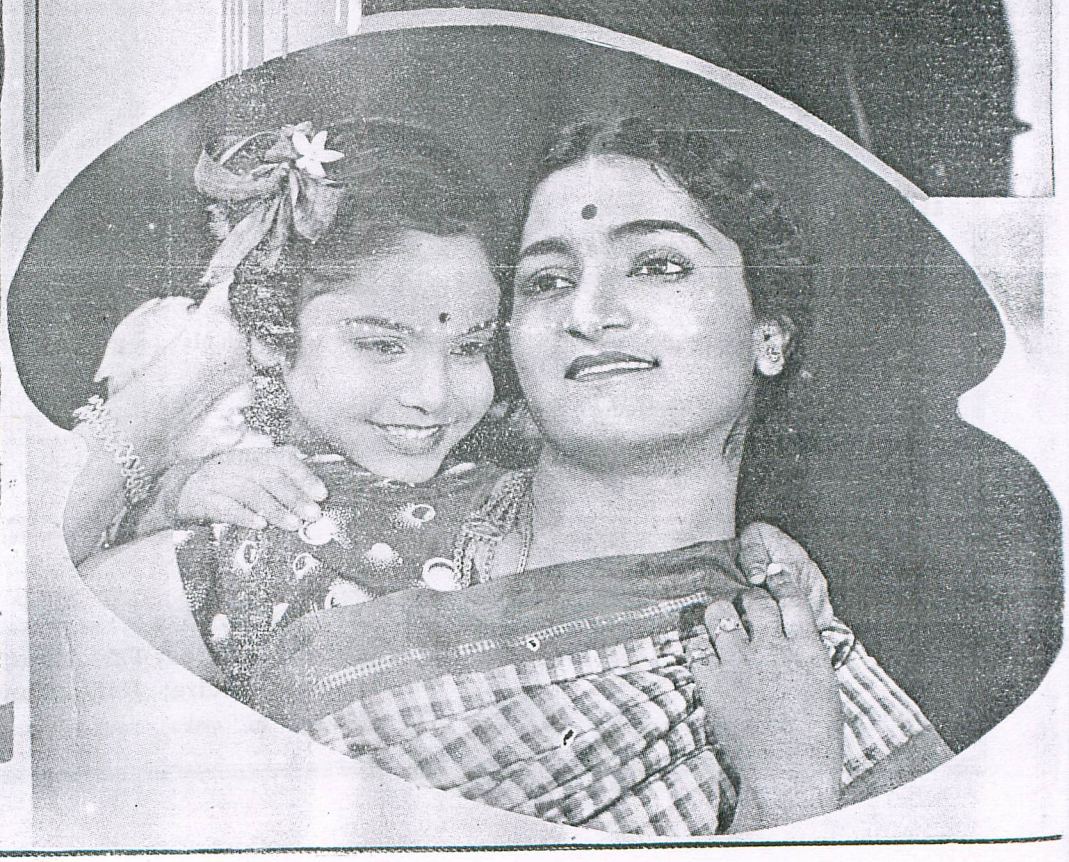

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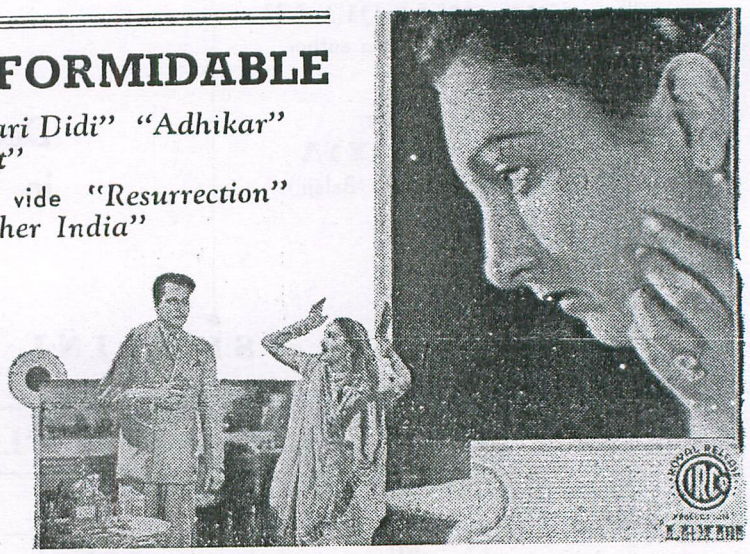

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Music by Timir Baran of "DEVADAS"

(*Contd. from page 54*)

ples capable of being communicated. Creative analysis of film production has been successfully tackled by the Soviet directors, chiefly by Eisenstein and Pudovkin, and is taught in the State Academy of Soviet Cinematography, at Moscow.

"ACTING FILMS" AND "CHRONICLE FILMS"

The Soviet cinema technique is undergoing drastic change. The popular montage stage is over. The idea of the evolution of the Soviet cinema can best be conveyed by a cursory survey of the methods and works of important directors.

After Kulesov, Dziga Vertov occupies an important position. Kuleshov advocated the "acting cinema" as it was then termed, which bases the picture on script and acting. Vertov on the contrary, fought for documental films, for a picture without scenario, actors or studios. From 1922-25, Vertov produced such films. All these were documentary, but neither the connection of time nor place respected. The impulse of didactic construction leads the composition. His chronicle films have retained to this day the charm of exceptionally temperamental documents, the most remarkable of which was the one dedicated to the funeral of Lenin. This reel was subsequently incorporated in the composite film "Three songs of Lenin". It is one of the most original and highly effective pieces of work one could imagine.

A shot from Yudkerich's "Gardener".

Chronicle films occupy very important position in Soviet Russia. They are as important as the newspapers. They keep the masses informed of the gigantic achievements of the new world. Over 150 cinema operators are daily recording the daily happenings (socialist construction) in USSR.

Boris Barnett, the well-known Russian Director under whom the author worked while shooting "On the Blue Ocean."

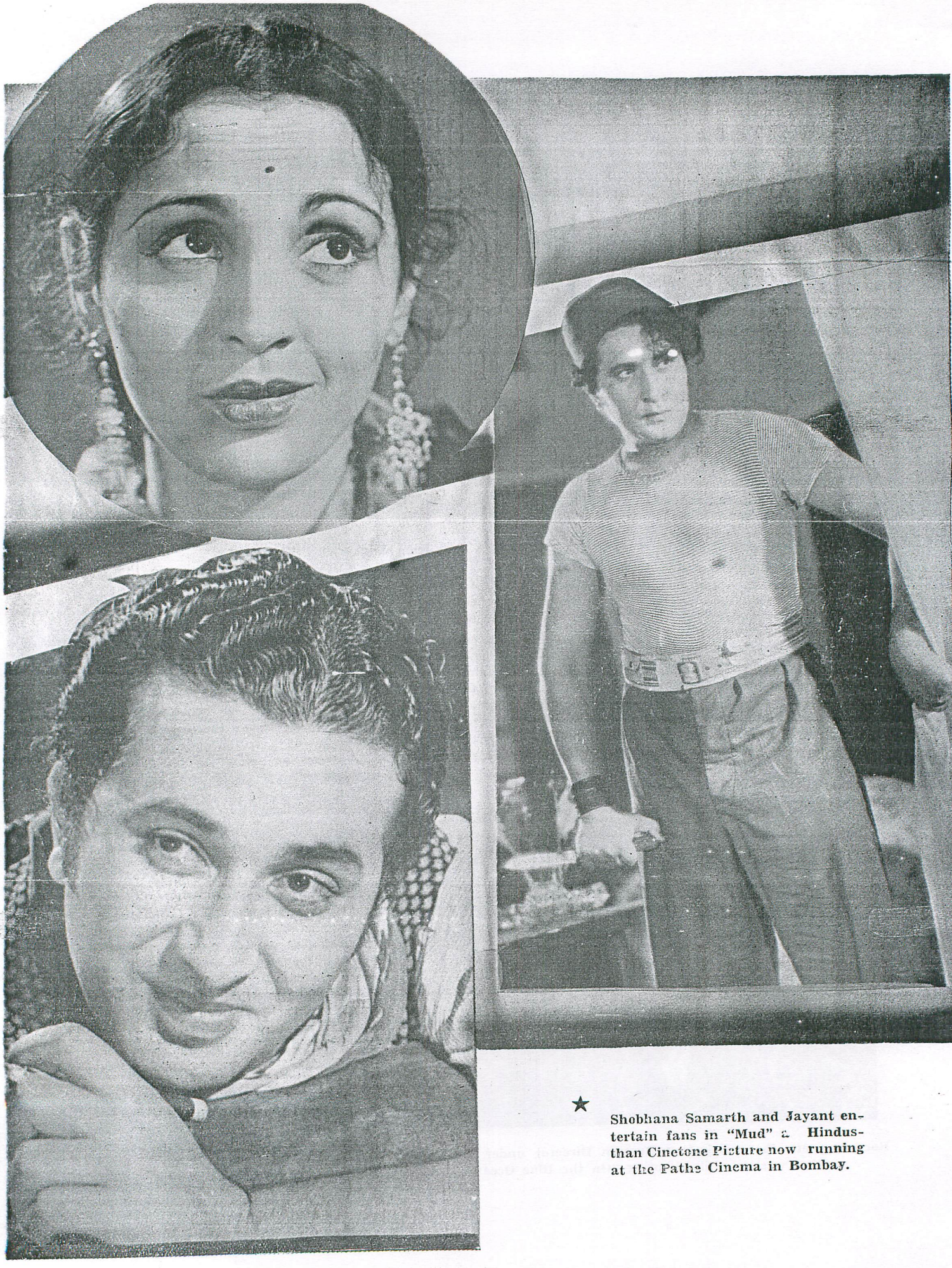
MASTERPIECE SHOT WITH OLD CAMERAS!

Eisenstein's first appearance in the cinema was in "Strike". His second film "Battleship Potemkin", may be considered as the first great production of revolutionary epics in the cinema. The theme of "Potemkin" concerned the revolt of the crew of a battleship against their officers on account of the bad food; the warm reception of the rebel ship by the people of Odessa; the attack on the latter by the local military; and the final meeting of the battleship with the remainder of Russian fleet, from where instead of exchanging shots, the Red Flag is hoisted and they greet each other. It will have a permanent place in the history of the film as one of the finest examples of this youthful art, and was shot almost exclusively in the open air with antiquated cameras. It took four months and was taken in Odessa itself.

"One could neither conceive nor present this work in the theatre, one can only show it on screen," said Pudovkin in appreciation of it.

A contrast to the Eisenstein school was the trend headed by Pudovkin. While Eisenstein in his "Potemkin" and "October" depicts the masses, Pudovkin in his films

(*Contd. on page 61*)



★ Shobhana Samarth and Jayant entertain fans in "Mud" a Hindusthan Cinetone Picture now running at the Pathe Cinema in Bombay.

A picture from the Russian film "Ashkhabad".

(*Contd. from page 59*)

concentrates his main attention on individual persons created by the revolution. His important films are "Mother", "End of St. Petersburg", "Deserteur", and the latest "Minin and Pozharsky."

Dovshenko is a film director who endeavours to make synthesis of the Eisenstein and Pudovkin schools. He has created films of great social ideas, while at the same time saturating his productions with lyricism and emotion. The images of living people created by Dovzhenko grow into big social generalisations. He is creator of some of the finest films depicting Ukrainian life in "Earth" and "Arsenal".

50 MILLIONS SAW THIS FILM!..

Alongside these masters, a high standard has been reached by a number of younger directors, namely Barnett, Ermler, Trauberg, Yudkevich and others. The excellence of "Mother", "Potemkin", "Earth" has been maintained and continued in "Chapayev", the film produced by Vasilyev brothers concerning one of the episodes of Civil War. Their work represented a new synthesis of the creative efforts of Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dovzhenko.

That "Chapayev" is by no means a solitary achievement is proved by the recent appearances of "Lenin in October", "Return of Maxim", "We from Kronstadt" and many others.

Over 50 million saw Chapayev. Alexander Nevsky, Eisenstein's latest film was seen by six million people in one month alone. (Good films run in USSR for months together and are greeted by packed houses).

30,000 PROJECTORS

At the beginning of 1925 only 14 per cent films shown in the country were of Soviet origin. Today the percentage is not less than 95.

There are more than 30,000 projectors (inclusive of those in schools and other organisations), over 10,000 being fully equipped theatres. Molotov's report provides for the extension of the net-work of cinema theatres and six-fold increase of permanent and other sound cinemas by the end of the Third Five Year Plan (1942).

Film finance in the rest of the world is a cross between a science and racket. To finance a film, money is bought and sold. Lavish automobiles, expensive office equipment, costly advertising add to the overhead costs, and the film stars have to be persuaded by fat cheques to appear in pictures in order to persuade a jaded public to risk being fooled again. In the USSR stock exchanges and the brokers and middlemen have passed out of existence. Work is demanded from each according to his ability and is recompensed to each according to the work performed.

The film industry and the film distributing trade is in the hands of the state, the controlling body being the All Union Soviet Film Direction in Moscow.

The Film Section of the Central Committee of Art which is closely associated with the Government, regulates the planning of subjects as well as their subsequent execution.

(*Contd. on page 63*)

A photo from "Lenin in October" a Russian picture with a socio-political theme.

Satya Rani as Rukmini in Nootan Pictures, MADARI MOHAN, shortly to be released.

(*Contd. from page 61*)

FILMS FOR CHILDREN

There are studios in ten cities in the Soviet Union, for the production of "story films", including two studios for the production of children's films. A large group of studios is now being built in the Caucasus and when this is completed all the more important Soviet films will be made there, the site having been chosen for its excellent weather conditions and varied scenery.

Films are made for different national republics, in their languages, national in character but socialist in content.

The control of newsreel and documentary films is vested in Newsreel Film Trust. Varied work is done in this line. Special newsreels for children up to 8 years and from 8-17 are also made. There are special theatres for the exhibition of chronicle films; they remain open for 12 hours, with continuous programme.

Raw film material and cinema equipments including cameras and lenses are manufactured in the land itself and in the near future, the studios will use only Soviet material.

In each city where there is a studio or film manufacturing plant there is also a technical research institute. They issue also technical film journals.

In 1931, only 100 million feet of film was produced, but in 1936 this figure reached 350 million feet and will show an increase of 150 per cent per year.

A young Russian actress who generally works in children's films.

SOME PROFIT

The record gross receipts from the exhibition of one film in Soviet Union reached 66,000,000 rubles and amounted to an approximate return of 5000 per cent (exchange rate 25 rubles to £ 1).

All cinemas show special children's programme in the morning and as part of their school curriculum children are shown educational films, interest films and play films. Besides there are special cinema theatres for children.

The ordinary problems of competitive advertising do not occur in USSR. There is literally no attempt in any sphere of activity to attract people to prefer one product to another. Advertising of films and cinemas resolve itself into far simpler art of announcement.

NO "FILMINDIA" THERE?

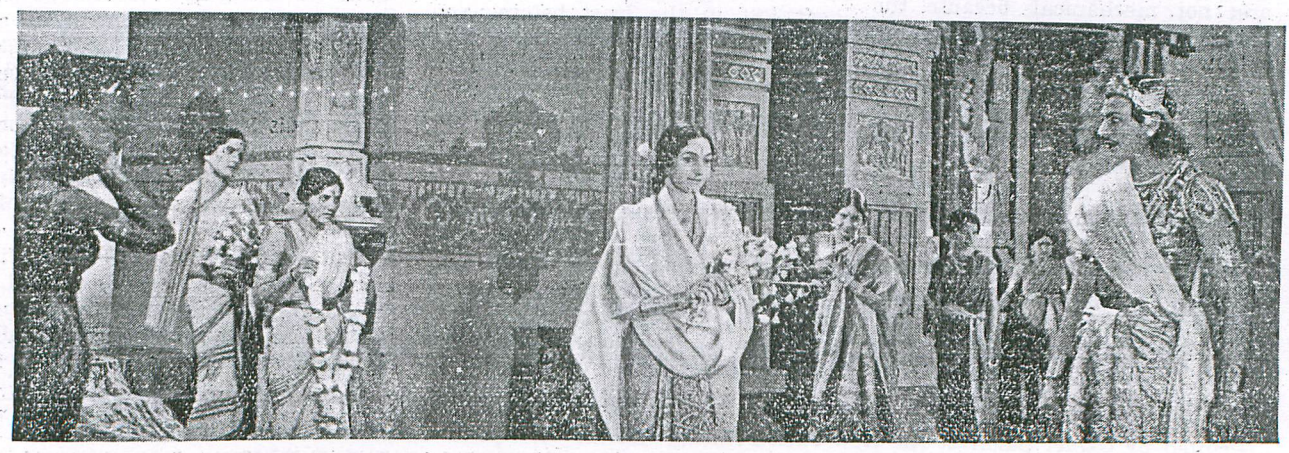
There are no film-fan magazines, but there are two magazines—one technical and the other artistic and critical.

The Soviet film authorities pay much attention to serious criticisms. They constantly ask visitors for criticism,—constructive and destructive—of films they have seen. The film critics in the newspapers and magazines are highly paid journalists and their views are treated seriously by the film authorities.

A special institute for psychology exists to make extensive research in finding out the public's reactions in different types of films. Eisenstein has much to do with this work.

In 1926, D. W. Griffith, the pioneer American film director, called the movie "the working man's university". This has been realised for the first time in Soviet Russia.

India can learn a lot from Soviet Russia. In Eisenstein's words—"We need films of meaningful vision. We want scenarist's approach to the ant-heap of life, their assault on reality. We need collectors of what is socially visualised. But that is not enough. He must carry us away, set us on fire, so that we seize our camera, and rush to some dull spot on our boundless map that the writer with his eloquence has set aflame with the fire of life. To be possessed of our subject—that is what the writer must implant in us. Without it every enterprise remains pale shadow hanging over the silver canvas of the screen."



An interesting situation from "Gorakhnath" an Arun Picture, now showing at Central Cinema, Bombay.

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For The Technicians

(*Contd. from page 49*)

RECOGNISE THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Which brings us back to where we started, in craving the indulgence fo the responsible critic and a certain measure of his discretion before sitting for the final judgment. Let him criticise that part of our work that is creative and not mechanical, because the mechanical is that elementary aspect of our work which every worker knows or should know. If anyone lacks this knowledge of the very principles that govern his work that worker is not fit to be classed among the creative artists of his profession and his work is not worthy of consideration.

Judge, therefore, the artist behind the camera or behind the controls of an audio-amplifier. and not the automaton that presses a switch or twirls a knob, judge him by his response to the demands of the story in his own particular individual way. See and hear him bringing to life the characters the director is attempting to create, enjoy through him the players live their parts before you, thrill to the moods he creates, the joy he infuses, or the sorrows he paints.

And if sometimes, carried away by the moods he has created, you get lost in the feast before you and forget him, you have unwittingly paid him the highest compliment that is and must be the ambition of every true artist.

For he will know that he has succeeded in his mission of transporting you beyond the grim technicalities of the cinema into the realms of reality, and will be happy in the satisfaction that for once has a perfect piece of cinematography or audiography been accomplished.

Guide to Foreign Films

(*Contd. from page 39*)

*****MAN OF CONQUEST (Republic) Featuring: Richard Dix, Gail Patrick, Joan Foontaine, Edward Ellis Etc.**

Here is a strong story of the early pioneering days, when America was being slowly built as a nation. Rough, ready-witted and resourceful Sam Housten, a historical memory to the people of Tennessee, is the central figure of this rough and tumble tale with a distinctly patriotic theme of freedom. But it is not merely a thriller because it has a big enough element of psychological melodrama to lift it far above the average run of pictures in this class.

Gail Patrick and Richard Dix give splendid performance in the midst of some really wild and frightening incidents. Certainly a picture to be seen twice.

Printed by Camer Saleh at the New Jack Printing Works, 75, Apollo Street, Fort, and published by him for "filmindia Publications Ltd." from 104, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

be another record breaker as the producers think that nothing better has been given in this line of production.

At the studios two pictures will be going into shooting simultaneously, one is "Padosi" (The Neighbours) a social story which Director Shantaram will handle while the other is "Ram Shastri" another social theme on justice written by Mr. V. S. Sukhtanker and which picture will be in charge of Messrs. Damle and Fatehlal.

The Prabhat programme for 1940 is expected to be a very ambitious one. One of the biggest costume pictures which the East can give is likely to go into production sometime in the month of June.

SARASWATI CINETONE

"Mazi Ladki" is drawing still in Poona and at several provincial towns because of its comedy element. The picture was directed by Dada Saheb Torney who is now going through a volume of new material to find his next story.

NAVAYUG CHITRAPAT

This new company, it is reported, has already started functioning by undertaking their first picture called "Lapandav", (Hide and Seek).

ARUN PICTURES

By the time this is in print director Bhal G. Pendharkar's "Alakh Niranjan" or "Gorakhnath" will be at the Central in Bombay. In the cast we find old and favourite names like Leela and Chandrakant.

KOLHAPUR

HUNS PICTURES

Director Vinayak has now completed "Better Half". With Baburao Pendharkar and Leela Chitnis in the lead this social picture which is written by principal P.K. Atre is expected to be a winner of the season.

CALCUTTA

NEW THEATRES LTD.

Director Barua's "Zindagi" is now ready with Saigal and Jamuna leading the cast. The picture is expected to be a box office success.

Baburao Patel and a Warner Bros. starlet.

Phani Majumdar is giving the finishing touches to "Doctor" a social subject which is being produced in Bengali.

Director Amar Mullick's picture is at last named "Avinetri". It depicts the heart-struggles of an artiste, in this case a lady from good society who joins the stage for a career.

Another picture which is awaiting release is "Andhi".

FILM CORPORATION

Under director Ram Daryani fast progress is being registered in the production of "Hindusthan Hamara" with Padma Devi and Jamuna in the lead. Daryani Brothers with their usual love of detail expect to make this a sensational success of the year.

KALI FILMS LTD.

It is reported that this company has secured the services of Padma Devi on an annual contract for their future Hindi and Bengali pictures. Bombay is more conversant with the excellent name this star has achieved by being popularly known as the Colour-Queen of India.

SOUTH INDIA

SALEM SANKER FILMS LTD. (Salem).

"Prahalada" the Tamil mythological picture produced by this progressive concern is reported to be having record runs in various places in the Presidency.

SRI JAGADISH FILMS (Madras)

"Malli Pelli" is reported to be having unequalled success.

MADRAS UNITED ARTISTES CORPORATION (Madras)

"Baktha Chetha" a Tamil historical, with Papanasam Sivan, G. Subbulakshmi, S. R. Janaki, Master Thirumalai and Kothamangalam Subbu, is reported to be running well in various places.

Their next picture "Ahimsa Sakthi" will have well-known star S. D. Subbulakshmi in the lead.

VEL PICTURES LTD. (Madras)

While their "Panduranga Vittal" is having good run at important places, their next production "Bakthi" is reported to be nearing completion and will be screened soon.

VAUHINI PICTURES (Madras)

For 1940 they have started shooting the Telugu social "Sumangali" which is expected to be a greater success than "Vandemataram."

BABY SAROJA RELEASES (Madras)

"Kamadhenu" a Tamil social is being produced at the Vel Picture studios with Baby Saroja, G. Subbulakshmi in the lead. Director Nandlal Jaswantlal is reported to have taken great pains to make his first attempt at a Tamil picture a success.

MOTION PICTURE PRODUCERS COMBINE LTD. (Madras)

Directed by Ellis R. Dungan "Surya Puthri" will go into shooting shortly.

Shooting of the picture "Child Marriage" with great social significance, was inaugurated by Mayor S. Satyamurthi. Director Ramkumar is expected to give a really good picture in this.

DANDAPANI FILMS & SALEM MOHINI FILMS (Madras)

"Kavi Kalamegam" is expected to be released soon.

ASANDAS CLASSICAL TALKIES (Madras)

"Manimegahalai" will be on the screen shortly.

Studio Close-ups

BOMBAY

RANJIT MOVIETONE

"HOLI" a social subject featuring Motilal and Khursheed will come to the screen sometime in the last week of March. The picture is expected to prove a big success as it will be released at different stations on the Hindu festival day of Holi.

Director JAYANT DESAI is busy taking the indoors of "Dipali" featuring Vasantee, our little great star.

"India To-day" a social picture with a new theme as they say is also awaiting release.

"Pagal" another social has also been completed and is waiting for its turn to come to the cinemas.

Sardar CHANDULAL SHAH is busy scrutinizing new stories for his several directors and hopes to find one for himself to keep him busy during the year.

BOMBAY TALKIES LTD.

"REBEL" directed by ACHARYA is lying ready but will take its second turn in general release. Just at present the studios are busy with Devika Rani in a new social picture directed by NAJMUL Hasan Naqvi.

SAGAR MOVIETONE

"KUM KUM THE DANCER" a social theme with Sadhona Bose and Padma Devi in the cast will be on the screen very shortly at the Imperial Cinema in Bombay. The picture has been released in Calcutta and is reported to have done well.

Two more pictures namely "Ali Baba" and "Civil Marriage" are also ready for release.

CIRCO PRODUCTIONS

With Kumar, Bibbo and Maya Banerjee sharing the acting honours "Laxmi" will be ready for the screen before the end of this month.

"Suhag" under Director Balvant Bhatt is being shot "day and night", according to their studio news, while "Gita" with Durga Khote and Chandra Mohan in the lead is already taken in hand by director Altekar.

INDIA ARTISTS LTD.

"Bahurani" the first social picture with Kishore Sahu and Rose sharing stellar honours is now receiving finishing touches and the producers expect to release the same early in the month of April.

NOOTAN PICTURES

"Madari Mohan" is now ready for release with Satyarani and Raj Rani in the cast. This mythological story is expected to be well received. That well-known dancer Sunita Devi will perhaps again claim attention by superb dances which she is reported to have given.

HINDUSTHAN CINETONE

S. H. Manto's "Mud" has really become gold dust, as a film critic puts it, at the Pathe Cinema. This picture has been very enthusiastically received by all people and is likely to continue for a long time at the said cinema. The unexpected success of "Mud" has suddenly made the future programme of the producers a bit more ambitious.

SUDAMA PRODUCTIONS

"Chingari" is now receiving finishing touches from director Badami. They say that Sabita will once again score in this one. Another social story called "Sawan" has been purchased from the celebrated writer Pundit Indra and will go into shooting after the present one is completed.

ADVANCE FILMS

Director A. M. Khan has taken up a fast thriller called "Anar Bala" for production. Shanta Kashmiri and Usha Devi with Benjamin lead a very good cast.

MOHAN PICTURES

"Hamara Desh" a comedy thriller has been completed with Amir Karnatki in the lead.

"Jadu-I-Kangan" a picture full of magic, illusions and romance is receiving finishing touches with Nanubhoy Vakil while "Jagat Mohini" another social mystery thriller is still on the sets.

"Volunteer" a subject directed by Amarnath with Yasmin and Nazir in the lead is expected to throw fresh light on our national problems.

PARAMOUNT FILM CO.

Mr. Kikubhai Desai is now giving finishing touches to "Amazon" (Aflatoon Aurat) which the company claims to be an ambitious production of the year with Moti in the starring role.

"Golibar" will be released at the Lamington Talkies from 1st March 1940.

"Dunya Mane" has been chosen as the next subject by Kikubhai Desai, the story, dialogues and songs have been written by Munshi Ajiz of 'Dunya Na Mane' fame.

"Mere Raja", "Sinbad the Sailor", "Zigomar" and "Sheikh Challi" are on the production list of 1940.

FAMOUS FILMS

Their Telugu picture "Dharma Patni" with Shanta Kumari has now been completed and will be released in the near future. Mr. Shiraz Hakim is now concentrating on the choice of a new story which will probably be produced in Hindusthani.

ROYAL FILM CIRCUITS

Mr. V. R. Mehta the enterprising proprietor of this company is now waiting for the completion of "Laxmi" a Circo production which he expects to float in his usual inimitable way.

POONA

PRABHAT FILM CO.

"Sant Dnyaneshwar" a superb mythological story directed by Messrs. Damle and Fatehlal has been completed and will be on the screen by the time this is in print. This picture is expected to

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